DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 301 984 EC 211 781

TITLE	Guiding Gifted and Talented Students. A Handbook for Counselors, Parents, and Teachers.
INSTITUTION	California Association for the Gifted.
PUB DATE	88
NOTE	66p.
AVAILABLE FROM	California Association for the Gifted, 2384 Schoenborn St., Canoga Park, CA 91304 ($5.00).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Career Counseling; *Counseling Services; *Counseling Techniques; *Counselor Role; Cultural Differences; Elementary Secondary Education; Emotional Development; Females; *Gifted; Program Development; Underachievement

ABSTRACT

Intended for counselors, parents, and teachers, the handbook covers academic, affective, and career/life planning counseling needs at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. An introductory section addresses goals of gifted and talented education and program elements. A section is provided for each educational level with subsections concerning: characteristics of gifted students at that level; needs of gifted students at that level (broken down into the domains of academic and study/process skills, affective factors, and career and life planning); meeting the needs of students at that level; counseling program options (for each of the three domains); and counseling roles (of counselors, teachers, and parents). A separate chapter addresses underachieving gifted students with sections on the underachieving at each of the three levels, on culturally different underachievers, on learning disabled underachievers, and on underachieving girls. A final section is addressed to parents of gifted children and covers the parents' role in counseling the gifted--the balance between home and school, and techniques for parents. (DB)

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GUIDING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

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a handbook for counselors, parents, and teachers

by the

California Association for the Gifted

2

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GUIDING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

A handbook for counselors, parents, and teachers

California Association for the Gifted
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INTRODUCTION

Counseling mentally gifted and talented young people is an art, and very few of us come by it naturally. For parents or educators there is much to learn about how to assist the gifted as they struggle to create a place for themselves in our complex society.

Educators — counselors, teachers, and administrators — need training for teaching and understanding the gifted.

Parents look to educators first for answers as "What do I do when Sarah says she is bored?" or "How do I keep Kevin from bugging everybody with his questions?" Educators must help gifted and talented students survive in situations where mediocrity is served, and where they are left to make it on their own. Educators — whether they are counselors, teachers, or administrators — need training for teaching and understanding the gifted.

The California Association for the Gifted (CAG) believes that California schools need to support a valuable natural resource: gifted students.

For 25 years CAG has urged that increased attention be given to the needs of the gifted in the affective domain, where there are six identifiable categories and important elements which need differentiated and uniquely appropriate strategies. (Please see page 6, "Components of the GATE Program.") Often the elements within the affective domain are forgotten in school GATE plans or are not provided by trained and understanding staff members.

We believe that this handbook gives school personnel a place to start or improve their skills at monitoring the behavior and progress of gifted students. Each level — elementary, middle school, and high school — is divided into the counseling responsibilities of academic, affective, and career/life planning. While concentrating on these three responsibilities we have addressed the characteristics and needs of gifted students, strategies to meet these needs, counseling program options, roles of school personnel and parents, and finally the special concerns of those gifted students who are often neglected.

Authorship responsibilities for this handbook were divided by school level:
Marj Gatzke Frye, Elementary
Paul Sheckler, Middle School
Carol Smith, High School
Joy Malvitz, Special Concern — Underachievement

A special thanks to Sharon Mountford, Administrative Assistant; Cindy Myers, Secretary; Jody Hess and many other editors who helped to complete this CAG publication.

We hope that this handbook will be a practical guide for implementing and improving the guidance and counseling programs for gifted students in our California schools.

Paul Sheckler, Chairman
CAG Counseling and Guidance Committee

THE CHARGE

The unique needs of the gifted learner have caused us to look at counseling and guidance most carefully over the years. As parents and educators, we appreciate how very important it is to provide appropriate guidance and support to the gifted and talented young people with whom we live and work. To assist in that tremendous task, CAG asked the Guidance/Counseling Committee and its capable chairperson Paul Sheckler to prepare the document you are now reading.

We hope that this publication is of assistance to you as you work with young people in GATE programs. No one has all of the answers, but together we can pool our knowledge and our resources to provide a framework of support for gifted and talented students. We must not neglect this aspect of their growth and learning.

Judy Roseberry,
CAG Past President

About the art work for this book

The illustrations of vehicles are courtesy of George Cornwell, retired, Shasta County Office of Education. He used them to illustrate four different types of gifted students. The drawings were adapted for the computer by Brian Mountford, who also designed the book layout.

The book was electronically transmitted to a Macintosh computer and prepared for publication using Page Maker and a LaserWriter Plus.

The photographs are courtesy of the Fresno Unified School District, GATE Office.

GOALS OF GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

The goals and tasks of gifted and talented education in the State of California are to:

1. Document the need for and significant results from uniquely appropriate learning experiences,
2. Use a number of valid ways by which to identify the gifted and talented,
3. Increase the involvement of underserved groups,
4. Help underachievers achieve at a level commensurate with their abilities,
5. Improve the ability of teachers to cultivate in students high performance in the six categories,
   - intellectual
   - creative
   - specific academic
   - leadership
   - high achievement
   - visual and performing arts

   and to design and implement program options to improve these abilities,
6. Provide needs-based and appropriately differentiated learning opportunities and curricula for children with very high potential or demonstrated abilities,
7. Experiment with new ways of offering programs and various cost levels, and
8. Involve parents in planning and evaluating programs.

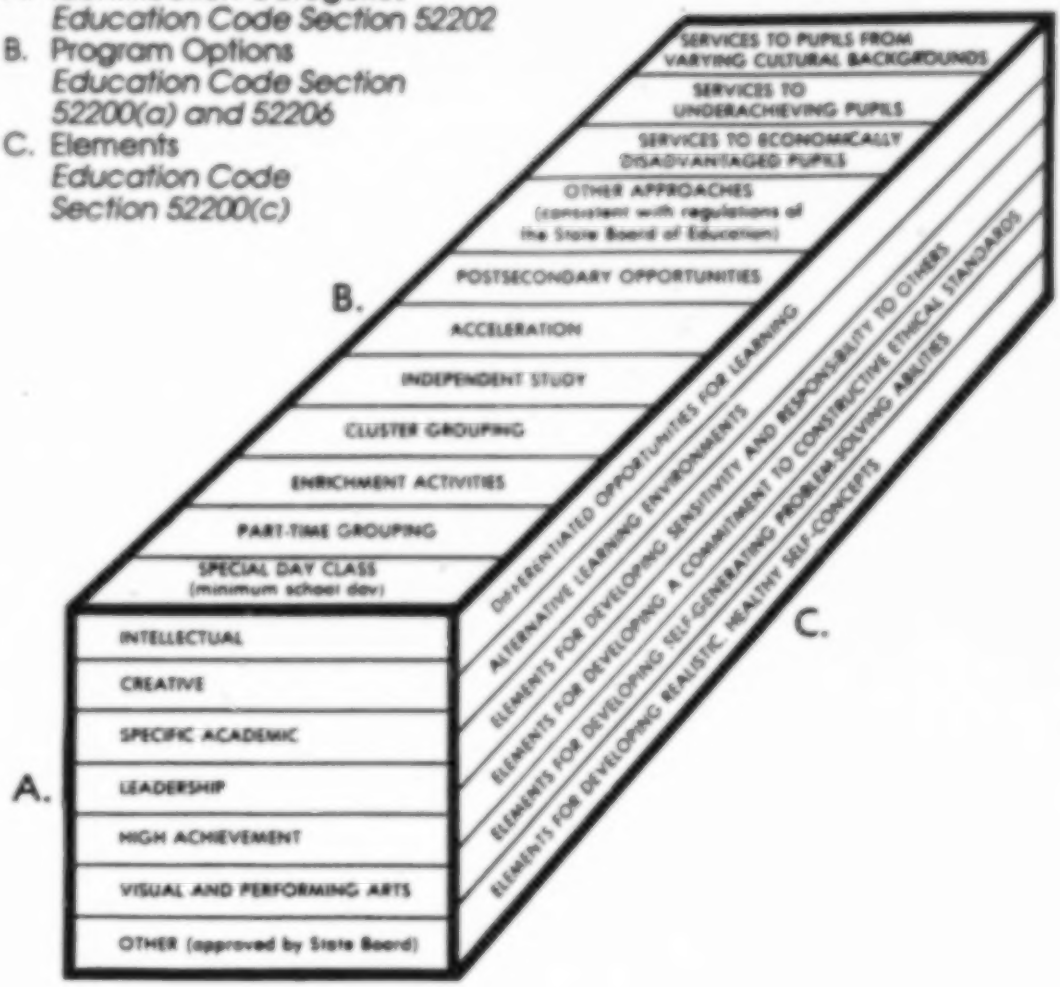
PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED

Please note the following elements which require guidance and counseling functions. Elements to be addressed in programs for the gifted and talented and also reported in evaluation efforts include:

1. Differentiated opportunities for learning commensurate with the particular abilities and talents of gifted and talented individuals,
2. Alternative learning environments in which gifted and talented individuals can acquire skills and understanding at advanced ideological and creative levels commensurate with their potential,
3. Elements that help develop sensitivity and responsibility toward others,
4. Elements that help develop a commitment to constructive ethical standards,
5. Elements that enable the gifted and talented to develop self-generating problem-solving abilities to expand each pupil's awareness of choices for satisfying contributions in his or her environment, and
6. Elements that help develop realistic, healthy self-concepts.

Components of the GATE Program

A. Identification Categories
Education Code Section 52202
B. Program Options
Education Code Section 52200(a) and 52206
C. Elements
Education Code Section 52200(c)



Prepared by Paul Plowman,
Consultant, 1984

While developing guidance and counseling programs for gifted students, it is important to keep sight of these "Goals of Gifted and Talented Education" and "Program Elements for Gifted and Talented" taken from "The GATEway: Gifted and Talented Education in California Public Schools," California State Department of Education, Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sacramento, 1984. References to Education Code Section 52200.

PART I:
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF PRE-SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

Young gifted students can be recognized early. They often have needs beyond what the regular curriculum or the untrained teacher addresses.

Some characteristics of young gifted students are:

- higher levels of concentration and thought
- ability to handle more complex patterns of thought
- ability to process thought at an accelerated rate
- desire and ability for in-depth probing and inquiry

These characteristics translate into:

- extensive vocabulary
- wide range of interests
- exceptional curiosity
- detailed observations
- original ideas and methods
- generalizations from specifics
- long attention span
- independent work

Sometimes parents do not realize these characteristics are atypical of young children until they observe a preschool or elementary school in action. The teacher's need to accommodate students of a wide range of abilities can be frustrating to the gifted, who learn quickly and prefer to progress at a rapid pace. Gifted students need to feel that school is teaching them just as it is teaching children who take more time to learn. If they do not sense purpose in school, they may feel alienated, which can result in negative behaviors of "acting out" for attention, or the lowering of self-concept and self-actualization.

Young gifted students are often attracted to older playmates who are really their peers in interests and thinking patterns. Age mates may have little in common with gifted youngsters, who often enjoy conversations with adults, because adults are able to understand and answer their questions. Some thrive in the school experience, become natural leaders, and excel academically; others would rather pursue interests which are not addressed at school; and some prefer to downplay their abilities and get by without working too hard.

B. NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

1. ACADEMIC AND STUDY/PROCESS SKILLS

The special academic needs of gifted children are apparent when they enter school. Many can read already, and others learn to read very rapidly. These children are more intellectually advanced than their

peers. They require fewer repetitions in order to understand concepts, and in their eagerness to learn, they want to move more rapidly than the classroom pace usually allows. They are also interested in knowing many things not covered by daily lesson plans. Because gifted children generally see more complexities in situations, and because they like to move at a rapid pace, they tend to prefer to work independently. They may experience frustration in a classroom either when they are required to do work they feel is unnecessary or when they are tied to a schedule which does not coincide with their long attention span and intense curiosity.

In addition to needing accelerated pacing and opportunities for enrichment activities, gifted children need to feel productive. The teacher should not feel threatened when gifted students ask questions the teacher cannot answer or function as "experts" who know more about some subjects than the teacher. The teacher can help by teaching them research skills so they can begin to assume some responsibility for their own learning. The teacher can also assist students to redirect time not needed to study what they already know. Students can be encouraged to refine their special abilities in a specific academic or fine arts area and possibly to share what they learn with their class.

2. AFFECTIVE

Poor self-esteem may lead to loss of motivation or to behavior which expresses the student's antagonism toward the expectations of others.

Self-esteem is usually high for gifted students who are succeeding in academic endeavors and in social relationships, and who are finding outlets for their creative drives. However, for children who find no meaning or satisfaction in their academic work, who are unable to find friends who share their interests, or who feel frustrated because they are unable to accomplish what is important to them, self-esteem can be low. Poor self-esteem may lead to loss of motivation or to behavior which expresses the student's antagonism toward the expectations of others.

All young children need to learn to get along with others, to respect and appreciate differences in individuals and to support the dignity of each human being. Behaviors which indicate potential difficulty include:

- defending themselves against the feeling of being different by choosing isolation, developing a sense of superiority, or developing anti-social characteristics;
- becoming impatient and intolerant of others who work at a slower pace or think at a less sophisticated level; and
- preferring to work or play independently so that they don't have to compromise their standards – to the exclusion of all others.

Gifted children usually have a strong sense of self and of what is right for them. They operate from an internal locus of control which can come into conflict with the real world requirements of school and of getting along with others. When children feel pressures to conform to ideas or activities which counter their own drives, they tend to feel

there is something wrong with them that makes them different. Their self-esteem is at stake as they learn to adapt to new situations and expectations. How well they succeed, in part, determines how they feel about themselves. All students need the affirmation that they belong in their community and can contribute to it. Gifted children sometimes have difficulty accepting the affirmation of others. Appreciation of other people is a skill some children must work to develop.

Gifted students do not always realize how different levels of interests and abilities in their classmates determine whom they will find satisfying as companions. Some children have a strong drive toward perfectionism and need help handling even small failures and disappointments. Some have great empathy for people and assume it is their responsibility to solve problems that are beyond their control. With supportive adults to help children deal with these issues, they can build a healthy perspective about their own abilities and gain confidence to tackle new experiences.

3. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

Exposure to career options and sighting life goals is useful for young gifted students. Talking about careers may answer questions the gifted have already begun to ask. Sooner than their classmates, they tend to plan ahead and see themselves in the adult world. Viewing career options can broaden expectations about how abilities can be used in productive ways. Looking at careers can help students see school as a valuable tool while working toward the future. In elementary school the key is to provide information and opportunity rather than to start channeling students in any direction too early.

C. STRATEGIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

Gifted children need school to be meaningful. They want to feel that their interests and abilities are taken into account. Bright students may balk at being required to complete work they feel they already know or do not need to know.

Gifted students may listen with their classmates to a presentation about the use of punctuation at the end of a sentence. They may quickly grasp the distinctions concerning when to use periods, exclamation points, and question marks. When the teacher assigns written practice in class and for homework, gifted students may resist, not because it is difficult, but because they feel it is a waste of time to practice what they can demonstrate that they already know.

Other gifted students in the same class may react by deciding it isn't important what punctuation they use at the end of sentences, because they excel at communicating orally. If they don't like to write, and don't see the need to write, they may decide that learning punctuation is irrelevant. Gifted students may also feel this way about such rote assigments as the learning of multiplication tables.

For these students to succeed in the classroom they must learn to accept the authority and expertise of the teacher. Teachers and parents must recognize that these students need to see the relevance of what they study.

Accelerating the curriculum can accommodate the gifted students' advanced level and rapid rate of learning. Individualizing can be accomplished by compacting the curriculum. Gifted students may demonstrate mastery of basic concepts in one-third or one-half the time of their classmates. This leaves time for students to internalize their learning by applying it and producing tangible results. The teacher can provide a group or individual with several options for project work to then share with the class or another audience. Serving as student tutors is another way high-achieving students can reinforce their understanding and learn to apply what they know.

Horizontal enrichment, which is expanding the curriculum to include areas of study not covered in the regular program, can stimulate the gifted students' desire to learn without taking them too far beyond their age level.

Project work can encourage the gifted to take responsibility for identifying their own interests and pursuing them with teacher support. For example, students with an interest in collecting shells can plan how to teach the class shell-collecting. They determine what is important to know and how to organize it to communicate it clearly. They plan what materials they will need and where to get them, make up worksheets to be copied for the class to practice, and decide how to test what the class has learned from the lesson. In final preparation, they can practice-teach the lesson to the teacher, friend, or family member.

After the class has been taught the finer points of shell-collecting, the student-teacher should evaluate how the planning and teaching went, and decide what would improve the lesson. The audience also may be asked to repond with praise and suggestions for improvement. A project such as this encourages development of planning, analyzing, researching, communicating, and evaluating skills. In addition, the gifted students are recognized for having worthwhile interests and knowledge outside the standard school program.

Learning characteristics shared by many gifted students are:

- preference and ability for independent work,
- long attention span and self-motivation in their areas of personal interest, and
- thirst for information.

To capitalize on these characteristics gifted students need to have a strong grounding in basic skills, research skills, time management skills, and practice in organizing and focusing projects toward tangible ends. Support must be given while students are challenged to produce their best efforts.

Often a bright student is allowed to "get by" with giving much less than appropriate effort. Even a mediocre attempt seems good compared to what others are able to accomplish.

Often a bright student is allowed to "get by" with giving much less than appropriate effort. Even a mediocre attempt seems good compared to what others are able to accomplish. When a teacher knows that the gifted student understands the basic concept being taught, an indifferent effort may be accepted. This leads students to become accustomed to easy success and modest expectations, and they may be ill-prepared for the challenge and more stringent standards they encounter in secondary school and university.

An over-emphasis on competitive situations can create problems for the gifted in several ways. Gifted students who compare their performance with classmates may develop false expectations of perfection in all areas. Additionally, competition can discourage students from recognizing and valuing the abilities and contributions of others. Such an emphasis on competition can also contribute to gifted students withdrawing from challenging activities which have no guarantee of success.

Cooperative learning groups simulate the team approach that many real-life pursuits require, and can help reduce the stress gifted students may feel from competition. Groups discussing a creative project may generate more ideas of high quality than an individual working alone. Additionally, the group setting allows students the opportunity to assume an appropriate leadership role.

Because school occupies so much time in students' lives between the ages of five and eighteen, experiences in school have a major impact on self-esteem. Positive intervention in the early school years should teach children to challenge themselves to achieve their own potential rather than to compete with others.

D. ELEMENTARY COUNSELING PROGRAM OPTIONS

1. ACADEMIC AND STUDY/PROCESS SKILLS

In selecting a program option to meet the needs of gifted students, the skills of teachers and administrators must be considered. To ensure total support for the GATE program, all teachers, whether or not they work directly with gifted students, require training in the unique characteristics and needs of gifted students.

There are several ways to provide differentiated curriculum for elementary gifted students:

- *Cluster grouping*: Gifted students are grouped within a regular classroom where appropriate curriculum and enrichment are provided. Size of cluster may vary from class to class, but it

should be substantial enough to provide interaction among the gifted students and differentiated instruction.

- *Pull-out:* Gifted students leave their regular classrooms for enrichment or special activities. Such pull-out classes may meet daily or less frequently, but they are intended to provide 200 minutes per week of qualitatively different instruction, which is the California standard. Remember that the needs of the gifted must be met in the regular classroom as well.
- *Individualized study:* Lessons are adapted to the specific learning strengths and weaknesses of each student.
- *Special class (seminar) for highly gifted:* Students in the top 1% are grouped into a small, challenging class. The class may contain students from a single grade or multiple grade levels.
- *Special (magnet) school:* Separate schools or schools within schools for gifted students offering special programs, e.g., computer science or creative arts. The purpose of a magnet school could be to attract students from an entire district for specialized instruction or to create a more diverse population when racial imbalance is a fact of residential patterns.
- *Independent study:* Teacher and student together with parents, write a contract for learning that takes place primarily outside the school setting with weekly monitoring agreed upon by all concerned. This can be a way of accommodating students who spend several hours a day after school practicing a musical instrument or participating in an ongoing program, such as dancing, sports, or science.

Whatever the program structure, teachers still must provide resource options to challenge and support the students

Whatever the program structure, teachers still must provide resource options to challenge and support the students. Mentors, in particular older gifted students, can work with younger students who have specialized interests. Because young students' interests may change from one area to another, it is wise not to lock them into a narrow program option.

Some theoretical structures which can explain program options are:
The Revolving Door Program of Joseph Renzulli,
The Enrichment Matrix of Abraham Tannenbaum, and
The Independent Learner of George Betts.

2. AFFECTIVE: SELF-ESTEEM, SOCIAL SKILLS, EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Building affective skills should be occurring continuously in the regular classroom. Setting high academic standards and teaching gifted students to expect the best from themselves should be coupled with encouragement and feedback about how to accomplish their goals. There are many classroom programs which teach self-awareness, appreciation of others, communication skills, decision making, and problem solving — all of which help students gain confidence in their abilities.

For the gifted who are having difficulty in their interactions with others or with their ability to achieve at an appropriate level, special intervention should occur early. Contact with a counselor or psychologist is preferable, but when these services are not available, there are some other options.

- Bibliotherapy enables the gifted student to read about other people, either real or fictional, who experience the same feelings or problems as they do. They can gain some insight into their own dilemmas. The Bookfinder (Dreyer, 1977) has cross referenced over 1400 books according to subjects of interest to children from 4 to 14 years of age.
- Peer tutoring or cross-age tutoring can be a productive way for some students to improve their own self-images while learning to interact with other students.
- Special projects or jobs can be designed to help students use special abilities or to improve areas of weakness.
- Role playing, discussion of moral dilemmas, and critical thinking activities in the classroom enable teachers to help the gifted develop their own value systems.
- Journals may be kept by students to record feelings and thoughts about school. These may be shared with the teacher who writes responses and questions to draw out the students' feelings, or the students may keep their thoughts to reflect upon privately.

3. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

Currently there is an emphasis on making gifted girls aware of career options, particularly those requiring the study of math and science.

Although there is no need for elementary age children to start making career choices or narrowing the focus of their interests too early, there is value in exploring career options.

Gifted children may anticipate their adult roles sooner than other children and feel the need to plan for adulthood. They may have curiosity about what people do all day on the job, or what it takes to prepare for jobs about which they are curious. Children can learn about varieties of careers through reading, interviewing classroom guests, or visiting workplaces in the community.

Researching a job may be a project of interest to gifted students. In preliminary discussion, students should decide on some questions to ask about a job relating to training, working conditions, and opportunities. The students call, visit, or write to individuals or organizations to gather information about the job. Students may be able to talk to individuals about what they like and dislike about their jobs and how they got started in their chosen fields. Students may then report to the class what they have learned. Young gifted students may be interested in several widely-diverse careers. As they gain information and expertise, they will discover which ones really tap their talents and interests.

Currently there is an emphasis on making gifted girls aware of career options, particularly those requiring the study of math and science. Schools may sponsor activities for girls as young as fifth or sixth grade to meet women in careers which the girls might not have realized were open to them. The influence of successful role models can be strong in the lives of gifted students.

E. COUNSELING ROLES

Counseling for gifted elementary school students is becoming a part of many gifted programs. These students need support and guidance to prevent or reduce the conflicts that cause negative attitudes or poor self-esteem.

1. COUNSELORS

Consulting with school staff and parents about the characteristics and needs of gifted students should continue throughout the children's school careers.

Counselors, administrators, and teachers have four major responsibilities within the counseling area for gifted students.

- The first step is to identify the gifted students. Key times to assess appropriate placement of children are before kindergarten, after first grade, and before fourth grade. Sometimes early identification of highly verbal children results in too much pressure for them in upper grades, especially if they lack performance skills. Likewise, introverted gifted children may not be noticed at kindergarten but they may be ready for more challenge in later years.
- The second step is to assure that gifted students are correctly placed in school programs. Not all gifted students are alike or have the same educational needs, and not all programs allow for all individual styles. If children are gifted but are not experiencing success in a gifted program, other steps should be taken. Independent study can be arranged for those who excel in an area not covered in the daily curriculum. Parents or other community volunteers can be enlisted to give time to gifted children while the classroom teacher is involved with other students. If children have artistic talents beyond the school's capability to nurture, teachers can assist students in finding other opportunities.
- The third step is consultation with school staff and parents about the characteristics and needs of gifted students. This close contact should continue throughout the children's school careers. People working with gifted students need guidance about how to set realistic expectations and goals for students, how to develop listening and feedback skills, and how to deal with frustration, aggression, and perfectionism felt by the child. Parents also need help in understanding what the options are for their gifted children.
- The fourth step is to counsel students about their personal, academic, and career goals. The counselor's role is minimal if the students' needs are being met at home and school. Counselors should be ready, however, to help students in problem

areas: developing self-esteem, setting personal goals, improving study skills, finding meaning and satisfaction in school, and building skills for adulthood.

2. TEACHERS

Many of the counseling needs of gifted students can be addressed in the classroom. Sensitive teachers can recognize when the gifted need the more individual in-depth attention of counselors and when parents need more information about the progress of their children. The teachers' willingness to facilitate such communication is very important. Planned activities by classroom teachers can help build self-esteem, communication skills, and problem solving skills.

- By role playing, children experience how it feels to be on the other side of an issue, thus building understanding and appreciation of people's differences. Communications skills improve in the process.
- Through class meetings teachers can help students develop ways of identifying problems and coming up with their own solutions.
- Relaxation and visualization techniques can be used to help students deal with their own stresses.

There are many packaged programs which provide activities in a sequenced way to help students learn coping skills. A few examples are Building Self Esteem by Robert W. Reasoner, Smile, You're Worth It! by Margo Kluth and Dorothy McCarthy, and Tribes by Jeanne Gibbs and Andre Allen.

3. PARENTS

Major factors in the formation of children's self-concepts are the degree of parental support, the learning and practicing of values, and the level of expectations set by parents.

Parents are the first providers of security, love, and a sense of belonging which lead gifted children to trust and accept their world. Major factors in the formation of children's self-concepts are the degree of parental support, the learning and practicing of values, and the level of expectations set by parents.

Parents must remember that their gifted children are children first and gifted second. Though they seem to have insight and information beyond their age, children do not have enough experience to provide perspective for their concerns. Parents can be most helpful by providing reassurance and support to children

- who express concern about social or personal issues over which they have no control,
- whose expectations for themselves or others are unrealistically high, and
- whose interests are different from their age group and who have difficulty finding friends.

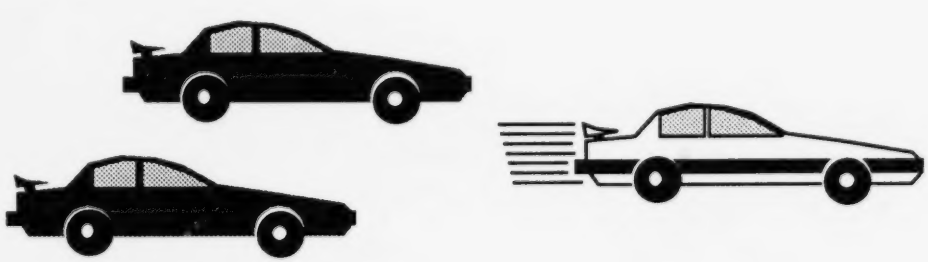
Parents usually need to work closely with their children and the school to provide positive educational experiences. Parents need to

acknowledge and help their children cope with impatience and frustration when their immediate wants are not fulfilled. Parents may also need to work with school personnel to find appropriate challenges for their children. School resources and staff are often limited, and it will be important for parents to find and provide enriching experiences for their children outside school hours.

A few areas of caution should be noted for parents who feel a responsibility to push their gifted children too hard to maximize potential.

- Be certain children do not feel pressured either by having unrealistic expectations to perform or by being overloaded with opportunities for enrichment and growth. Help them set goals and priorities appropriate to their capabilities, interests, and age level. Children may need help in saying "no" or "later" to interesting opportunities in order to avoid over-programming.
- Be certain that one child's giftedness does not take priority over other siblings' needs, interests, or abilities. An unrealistic sense of the importance of giftedness can occur unless the value and development of each family member's uniqueness is stressed.
- Seek information, advice, and support either through local parent group meetings or through membership in associations, such as the California Association for the Gifted, in order to better understand the special needs of gifted and talented children and to act as an advocate on their behalf.

High Achiever: No Speed Limit



PART II:
MIDDLE SCHOOL, grades 6-8

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

The hormonal changes occurring between the ages of 10 and 14 cannot be ignored when preparing a middle school plan for gifted students. During this period the demands on the body as a result of fluctuations in basal metabolism cause, at times, listless intellectual activity and, at other times, tremendous surges of energy.

In general, this age group is motivated more by peers than by parents, teachers, or other adults. Middle school gifted students want to explore curricular and extra-curricular activities and want to begin making assessments about their interests and abilities. They may be highly motivated, preferring to set their own goals and to select from a variety of program options. At this point the gifted begin to act out their non-conforming behaviors. They vacillate from wanting to work independently to wanting peer group approval.

These students can be persistent and perceptually strong, preferring self-directed learning rather than auditory approaches, such as lectures, oral drills, and recitation. Given a choice of learning and teaching modes, middle school gifted students would choose teaching games, independent study, discussion groups, and product-oriented activities.

B. NEEDS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

1. ACADEMIC

Gifted students need to explore a variety of courses and activities; therefore, locked-in tracking within a strict academically-oriented course menu is not advisable.

Acceleration in subject areas in which strengths are easily recognizable like math, science, and foreign language is stimulating and encouraging to gifted students. Acceleration in areas such as writing, performing arts, leadership, and computer operations can be accomplished through school activities, mentorships, and independent study.

Teaching styles should match the manner in which GATE students learn best—through independent, self-directed frameworks. They enjoy generating their own knowledge, because these efforts meet their need to create their own structure and satisfy their desire to know. Often GATE students in middle school have long attention spans, are self-motivated, and are perceptually strong.

They enjoy generating their own knowledge, because these efforts meet their need to create their own structure and satisfy their desire to know.

Gifted students often prefer to learn through their tactile and kinesthetic senses rather than through their auditory sense. Gifted students are inspired when using their unique ways of thinking and comprehending, but they often keep these ways to themselves unless

they can discuss them with other gifted or understanding people. Giftedness is a phenomenon of extraordinary perception accompanied by extraordinary abilities for abstract and comprehensive thinking as well as for creative means of expression.

When the gifted are viewed as irresponsible, it may be more a matter of how their creative behavior is viewed in a conventional classroom than an accurate description of how they accept responsiblity.

GATE students should have individual assessment, counseling, and program selection based on their individual needs. Some students should be referred to special GATE classes and some possibly referred to remedial services if learning disabilities are found.

2. STUDY/ PROCESS SKILLS

It is a mistake to think that the gifted are beyond needing the basics and are able to structure their own learning.

Many gifted students are "easy winners" in elementary school when the work is quickly accomplished and they "get along well" without exerting much effort. However, a rude shock comes in middle school when they are competing with other highly able youth who may already have developed advanced study skills and learning strategies. A cycle of failure can develop if the following study and process skills are not learned:

- discipline for task commitment and completion,
- decision-making skills for making value judgements and career choices,
- time management techniques to prevent academic stress and burnout, and
- expanding reading choices to deepen and broaden knowledge.

It is a mistake to think that the gifted are beyond needing the basics and are able to structure their own learning.

3. AFFECTIVE

Gifted middle school students who experience academic achievement, real life success, and creative/productive rewards also have strong self-concepts. Hopefully, the gifted are able to handle all of the middle school challenges. Needs arise when there is a radical drive toward perfectionism, a fear of success, a fear of failure, undue adult expectations, an intense sensitivity, a lack of self-definition, alienation from school and family, an inappropriate environment, a role conflict, or social isolation. Many problems for extremely able people arise from the discrepancy between their level of emotional development and the expectations of society.

The social problems of gifted adolescents stem from their tendency to demonstrate behaviors such as dominance, assertiveness, independence, and competitiveness. Additionally, social development of gifted middle school teens often lags behind their academic aptitudes. Interpersonal sensitivity may not correlate highly with academic achievement. This intelligence/social development rift can cause

hurt, isolation, and lack of peer identification. The gifted may even attempt to hide their abilities to achieve social acceptance. (Queen, 1983)

Gifted middle school students need to contribute to mainstream activities in their school, but at this stage, they begin to show their individual preferences which may differ from those of most other students. Genuine group leadership among the highly gifted has been found to be slight. In most situations, the leader is likely to be more intelligent, but not too much more intelligent, than the average of the group. Since there is a progressive decrease in the chances for leadership among young people above 130 I.Q., the gifted above 160 I.Q. have very little chance of being popular leaders. Chances for becoming a recognized leader increase as highly gifted students move into groups of students with comparable mental ability. (Brown, 1984)

The gifted experience a strong drive to satisfy their internal need for perfection and to reach parental standards of excellence. The gifted are less conforming and more self-sufficient, sometimes rebelling against a society perceived as being "phony". There is a belief that they are protected from delinquency by virtue of their superior abilities to perceive situations and recognize causes and consequences of behavior; yet, their sensitivity to unfavorable societal conditions sometimes makes them more vulnerable to problems of home, school, and community.

Emotional factors and psychological attitudes can either interfere with or facilitate the use of high mental skills. While IQ tests remain excellent predictors of how well students will do in school, they have little or nothing to do with who will earn the most money or prestige, or have the most satisfying social life or relationships. Goleman, 1988

If ignorance is bliss, then giftedness is stress. Five traits of gifted adolescents which can cause them stress are:

- advanced cognitive functioning,
- older contacts for friends and stimulation,
- early language competence setting them off from grade level peers,
- earlier onset and rapid progress through developmental stages, and
- awareness of being different.

The gifted need to know how to handle these different traits. From sixth to eighth grade gifted students are continually internalizing value decisions and comparing themselves with the norms, their peers, and authority figures. They often have the farthest to go to become self-actualizing and to establish values which offer meaning to them.

4. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

For middle school gifted students, especially those in grades seven and eight, it is no longer possible to separate educational planning from career planning. Already a tentative program needs to be mapped out to prepare many of these outstanding students for professions requiring university training. However, they still need to think in terms of understanding their multi-potentialities rather than making a single career choice.

The gifted need to be taught decision-making and goal-setting skills in a manner which focuses on value-setting and developing interests. Studies show that what gives gifted people the most satisfaction is a sense of doing something of value, of being involved in a mission. The achievers need to realize that their career planning often involves longer range goals and greater commitment and sacrifice than that of some of their age peers. Unfortunately, they often lack the necessary emotional maturity to seriously consider career/life goals, and tending to be self-sufficient, they are not readily open to advice from teachers, parents, or counselors.

Gifted girls and minorities often have a reverse problem in that too little is expected of them. They need to discover that career goals and personal happiness are compatible. Creative gifted students are often extreme non-conformists, and they need to learn structure in order for creativity to bloom. Finally, the gifted need to be exposed to a variety of experiences and to people with interesting areas of expertise. They need to perceive their community as their "school" and to relate their schoolwork to a world with even wider boundaries.

In a questionnaire given to middle school students in the San Francisco Unified School District GATE program (Judith E. Giampaoli, 1986) only three out of 25 items were listed as needs by 66% or more of the students. They are:

- to understand what my skills and abilities are,
- to receive help when my grades are poor, and
- to have information about careers.

Of these three needs only one, to have information about careers, was determined by the students as one which was not being met adequately. If anything, the questionnaire gives an indication of the importance career and life planning have at the middle school level.

C. MEETING THE NEEDS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

In most GATE programs gifted students are identified and for the most part, directed into GATE classes by grade five. If they are achieving according to expectations they remain in district gifted programs without debate. There are, however, some gifted students, possibly underachievers, who struggle in some or all academic areas. For these students, counselors and administrators should assess their previous scholastic performances and immediately plan counseling and/or remediation programs for them.

At entrance to middle school, assessment should be made as to whether gifted students have matched achievement in school with their abilities. Having that information assists administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents with curriculum planning for GATE students through grades 6, 7, and 8. Decisions may be made at this point for placement in advanced English, math, social studies, or science classes, for example.

Gifted and talented students should not be placed in advanced math classes, for example, when math has been a struggle for them, albeit the only class offered for GATE students at that grade is pre-algebra. Their obvious need may be for enrichment or acceleration in creative writing, art, music, dance, or social studies. Strengths should be identified and nurtured, and the basics should not be forgotten.

Through grades 6, 7, and 8, school personnel should be conscious of later blooming students (not identified gifted students) in such diverse areas as foreign language, fine and performing arts, computer programming, leadership, and science, to name a few. These students also need to be identified and served within the gifted and talented program.

School personnel, especially teachers, should recognize those gifted students who are

- low in self esteem and social skills,
- slow in emotional development,
- lacking in study/process skills and personal time management,
- out-of-touch with their value systems, and
- continuously attracted to alienated others, usually peers.

They will need a well planned, structured program which is designed to rebuild a positive psycho-social framework with which they can be happy and productive.

D. MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM OPTIONS

1. ACADEMIC

Gifted students should be placed in accelerated programs in line with their particular strengths. The placement could be in a high math strand or foreign language, for example.

The gifted should be guided into activities where special talents can be nurtured, like the school newspaper or yearbook staff, the drama group, debate team, speech class, school government, service clubs, advanced computer programming, chorus, band, or tutoring program.

The gifted should be encouraged to compete in science fairs, math contests, speech and writing contests, social studies or science Olympiads, talent searches, and community musicals when such gifts become clear to school personnel.

Note: There are a number of California college- and university-based programs which offer exceptional learning experiences for gifted and highly motivated students. U.C. Berkeley, Foothill College, U. C. Irvine (Pegasus Programs), Cal State University at Sacramento and

Los Angeles, the Claremont Colleges, and Johns Hopkins University, West Coast are colleges currently offering campus-based summer Talent Search programs.

Mentors should be sought in the school and community, and the opportunity provided for one-on-one learning. In some schools independent projects may be the sole opportunity for the gifted to pursue special interests or express themselves creatively. Teachers should be on the alert for aspiring talents in all areas, just as coaches seek out star athletes in track, basketball, or swimming.

Acceleration should be balanced with a wide selection of classes for the middle school student, because exploration and variety are basic needs of the gifted at this stage.

Coordination and promotion of accelerated programs with the high school and cooperation with the local community college can begin. Starting at middle school precocious students can be tracked through calculus, advanced foreign language, or the sciences.

Acceleration should be balanced with a wide selection of classes for the middle school student, because exploration and variety are basic needs of the gifted at this stage. Gifted students should be allowed to experiment and take risks in classes of their own selection. At least the gifted should be allowed to learn not to fear failure as they sort out their strengths and weaknesses.

Some type of grouping of gifted students provides a gain in peer group stimulation and interaction during the middle school years. An example of a program providing one period a day can be found in Walnut Creek Intermediate School, Walnut Creek School District. The structure of this program is as follows:

- *Grade Six:* A trimester offering includes science (scientific process), math (problem-solving and critical thinking), and music.
- *Grade Seven:* A language arts course features writing, grammar, literature, and oral language.
- *Grade Eight:* An advanced American government and history course emphasizes debates, independent studies, role playing, and critical thinking.

Some schools successfully group gifted students for humanities or independent studies during these middle school years.

Courses should be designed to allow the gifted some space to study independently and to work "hands-on" with course materials. They need time to use their creative thinking abilities in their own extraordinary ways. They are ready to apply and evaluate concepts more quickly than other students. Teachers should be aware of these essential elements when preparing units and lesson plans. Many gifted soon tune out during lessons using predominantly auditory teaching styles.

Classes for the gifted should satisfy their need for challenging and complex tasks. They often like to work alone on assignments which are product oriented and require innovative and divergent thinking, although they also need to develop group process skills in other assignments.

Underachieving gifted students should receive remedial assistance and should be placed in learning environments where their individual needs can be addressed. By the time they reach middle school, their lag in achievement puts them far behind their potential. It may be that placing underachievers in some classes for the gifted may help them find the motivation to accept academic challenges. In fact, such placement may be the only thing that saves them from disenchantment with school and from dropping out in high school.

2. STUDY/PROCESS SKILLS

Whereas classes for the gifted may save the underachievers, it is absolutely necessary that they, as well as all gifted students, maintain basic skills in all subjects, as content areas become increasingly complex during their secondary school years.

The gifted, as well as all other middle school students, can slip into mediocre study and process skills if given space to slip. Although most gifted students have the ability to structure mental challenges, they have the common malaise of not structuring work habits if the school and home do not insist on them. Gifted students should be expected to be disciplined in the way work is produced and observe assigned timelines for task completion.

3. AFFECTIVE: SELF-ESTEEM, SOCIAL SKILLS, EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Brainstorming and creative thinking should be used as techniques for solving genuine problems.

The counseling methods which work best with the gifted at middle school are approaches which are not very directive. Counselors and teachers realize that gifted students are frequently independent-minded and prefer finding problem resolutions on their own, even though they need and demand information.

Although group counseling efforts can be highly successful, the gifted often prefer individual counseling centered on self-management and self-monitoring rather than group counseling. This fits with their pattern of relying more on self than on externals, such as other people, chance, luck, or existing social practices or customs.

Brainstorming and creative thinking should be used as techniques for solving genuine problems, i.e. dealing with stress, being or not being accepted by the in-group, or deciding when to lighten personal expectations for themselves or others. The techniques used should lead to self-inquiry, which can be channeled into permanent planning skills.

4. MODEL PROGRAM

A model program which combines individual and group counseling effectively is at the Nueva Learning Center, Hillsborough, CA. "Self-Science: The Subject Is Me" is a course of study designed for use with students from second grade through adolescence. It unifies cognitive

tional patterns. If small group and individual guidance sessions are available, they can provide gifted students with the opportunity to practice coping skills needed to deal with their exceptionality and to provide meaningful behavioral patterns for relating to others. Such activities as role-playing, discussions, and volunteer experiences with others — candy-stripers in hospitals, for example — are important.

1. ESTABLISHING AN ADVISEMENT GROUP

Developing an understanding of self and others is critical to enhancing a gifted student's self-concept and developing appropriate motivational patterns.

In some school settings an advisement group is the most effective way to help GATE students with guidance needs. In the advisement group the gifted and talented are brought together "as a small community of peers" for the purpose of "personal growth and improved interpersonal relationships." The learning that occurs differs from traditional classroom learning in that:

- Knowledge of self and interactions in the group are the immediate focus of learning.
- Teaching and learning are shared, so that all group members have equal opportunity to give and receive information.
- The major learning problems addressed include communication, group participation, and risk-taking.

Individual learning in the group requires a commitment to group process — working towards individual and group goals in a spirit of cooperation, trust, and support. In fact, individual goals become so integrated with group goals that the communal effort can be greater than the sum of what each member could produce individually.

a. Group Leaders' Roles in Advisement

Teachers become group leaders/advisors under the tutelage of counselors in the following plan.

The role of group leaders as facilitators involves a willingness to share responsibility with group members and, at the same time, to model and reinforce attitudes and behaviors that work toward achieving group goals. Leaders must be aware of the needs of individual members, be trained in facilitating group processes, and believe in the importance of social interactions for gifted.

Leaders must be aware of the needs of individual members, be trained in facilitating group processes, and believe in the importance of social interactions for gifted.

Leaders/facilitators must accept the differences that the gifted group members have in relation to other students. They must feel secure enough with their own capabilities and values that the feelings and ideas expressed by the students do not threaten their ability to facilitate the learning processes within the group.

An advisement program can provide a personalized guidance program for gifted students. During an assigned conference period advisors meet with their 25 GATE advisees for 20 minutes every day to monitor their educational progress, to encourage their participation in school activities and to guide their high school, college, and career planning. Several times a quarter advisement time is extended to 30 minutes to allow for special activities. Advisors serve as GATE

and affective curriculum through a variety of approaches and activities, offering students an opportunity to develop and practice skills while studying themselves. "Self-Science" utilizes such activities as drama, role-playing, and guided meditations and imageries to provide shared experiences from which self-knowledge can grow.

Counseling with the gifted should encourage students to compete with themselves rather than with others. Encouragement imbues gifted students with a sense of purpose for their work. The presence of a material reward tends to focus students upon commendations rather than the self worth gained from outstanding work, so should be used selectively. Intermittent reinforcements (encouragement and incentive) have lasting value for gifted students. A teacher's encouraging, "Try again tomorrow", can provide more solace when things go wrong than a tangible reward.

Arrangement of peer groups having similar interests and abilities provides opportunities for interaction and sharing of concerns. These groupings help students to do the following:

- strengthen personal value systems
- accept individual strengths and weaknesses
- overcome personally set limitations on abilities
- enhance relationships with others
- recognize social responsibilities
- expand and awaken career and vocational interests
- learn to cope with expectations of others

Counseling should be blended into the fiber of everyday teaching and decision-making. Ideal school counseling takes place in every classroom.

The following description of a model GATE program at James B. Davidson Middle School in San Rafael School District combines academic and counseling features. The counseling group of eight students and a counselor meet for forty-five minutes a week for discussions aimed at developing self-esteem and social relations and at building decision-making skills.

- *Grade Six: Goal Setting Group* Students participate in individual projects, learning the process by which goals are set and achieved. They are guided through the process, evaluation, and implications of setting short- and long range goals.
- *Grade Seven: Counseling Group* Students select a project on which they will work together, e.g. writing and performing a play, one which allows for maximum interaction. Besides developing socialization skills, gifted students learn to explore and express emotions about events and issues as they arise.
- *Grade Eight: Counseling Group* Students build on skills learned in grades 6 and 7 as they begin to consider broad career goals and then form educational plans to accomplish them. Individual counseling is also available.

Counseling should be blended into the fiber of everyday teaching and decision-making. Ideal school counseling takes place in every classroom. Affective education is not only essential for the gifted but also for the typical emotionally erratic middle school student. In the case of gifted students, they need to discuss, role-play, and practice valuing, as they are acutely sensitive to their own and society's problems and concerns. They bring into real-life situations mental baggage

which most students their age are not yet considering.

Counseling should reflect both the special educational and normal developmental needs of gifted students. Few students are both intellectually gifted and emotionally/socially advanced.

...understand the nature of the developmental stages of the gifted — that they pass through some stages earlier and faster than their agemates, and may be later in other areas.

Gifted students, both girls and boys, should be encouraged to participate in at least one extracurricular activity or team sport to learn the value of teamwork and competition and to have the opportunity to practice leadership skills. Too often they drift entirely into individual endeavors and miss mainstream activities where their perceptions and abilities can be contributed for the good of the whole.

The affective needs of gifted students at the middle school level can be met by counselors and teachers who

- are honest and open,
- meet gifted students at the highest value levels, and
- provide a non-threatening, non-censuring relationship

and by parents who understand the nature of the developmental stages of the gifted — that they pass through some stages earlier and faster than their agemates, and may be later in other areas.

All school personnel and parents must be willing to become politically active within organized groups in order to protect the educational rights of gifted students at the community and state levels.

5. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

An ideal career and life planning program combines students in a counseling group led by a counselor or teacher who covers the gamut of topics including personal ones, such as stress, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships and leads toward career exploration and planning, as well as college investigation.

Within the counseling group, decision-making and goal-setting skills are taught, and personal values are probed, for they provide cues to what is worth doing and show how the students' choices eventually contribute to their personal lifestyles.

Students can write to admissions offices requesting current brochures and financial information. They can study high school course descriptions, visit high schools, and talk with counselors and teachers. They can invite high school students to visit to hear firsthand college search experiences.

A career night at the eighth grade can either be a culmination point after group counseling sessions, or it can be that single, vital night when school counselors, teachers, parents, and students meet to explore the options for gifted students. On this night a high school planning chart can be started which sketches educational and career plans that keep options open for gifted students.

A model from the GATE program in the San Jose Unified School

District outlines "planning the transition night" for eighth grade students preparing for high school. It involves discussion of the following items:

- Your educational plan: your key to success,
- College entrance requirements: keeping your options open,
- How to best use your potential: making the most of your high school experience, and
- The parental role: to guide, monitor, advise, and direct.

Bibliotherapy, the reading of biographies and fiction, can help students as they relate to the experiences, obstacles, and efforts portrayed by characters in literature. Career fantasies can be indulged in writing and sociodramas.

Parents should freely discuss their work and values with their gifted students. Observations of other people in the local working environment are enlightening and help to narrow the field of choices for the gifted.

Shadowing a mentor as part of a career exploration program at school is a way to match talented students with high school students or adults in activities or in the workplace. Gifted students in the middle school need to see the relevance of their school programs to real-life situations.

Volunteer work is another way for students to gain learning experiences outside the school. With volunteer work as with mentoring, shadowing, or outside jobs, gifted students and their parents must set limits to avoid burnout.

Shadowing and volunteer work show a gifted person how to find success while functioning in social and work situations. "IQ and success in living have little to do with each other. How well people manage their emotions determines how effectively they can use their intellectual ability. For example, if someone is facile at solving problems in the quiet of her office, but falls apart in a group, then she will be ineffective in a great many situtations." (Goleman, 1988)

Because truly creative gifted students may face an entirely different type of problem in career and life planning — extreme non-conformism — they need to be directed by counselors and teachers so that they study the basics. They must accomplish the following:

- learn structure and discipline to help them select and perfect ideas,
- persevere until the project is completed, and
- know the rules which pertain to art, music, science, writing, and other creative endeavors.

Guidance and counseling of the gifted must be an integral part of the

E. COUNSELORS' ROLES

students' daily experiences in middle school. Counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents must all share the responsibility. Gifted students need attention not because they have problems, but because they have unique abilities and needs that require extra attention. If, however, appropriate counseling does not exist for students at risk, suicide, early sexuality, pregnancy, alcoholism, drug abuse, and eating disorders may develop.

1. COUNSELORS

Counselors should create an environment which encourages students to assess their interests and abilities, a step that facilitates decisions about appropriate academic programs.

At middle schools counselors provide valuable services for students, teachers, and parents. Counselors should make gifted students and their parents aware of the sequence of courses available in secondary schools which prepare students for entrance into California colleges and universities, as well as other selective universities. While career planning in middle school can be done in traditional ways, such as perusing selected published materials and having discussions between school personnel and family, it is also important to bring students together for group interaction regarding career choices and aspirations. Counselors should create an environment which encourages students to assess their interests and abilities, a step that facilitates decisions about appropriate academic programs.

Counselors can also match gifted students with mentors from within the school staff or community. These mentors might excite or extend an interest in a school program or career possibility. Mentors may actually save some students from depression or lasting underachievement.

Parents need to be counseled, individually and/or at group meetings, about the importance of becoming involved in the educational plan of the gifted middle school child. Counselors may assist parents who may over- or underestimate their children's abilities and who may be applying inappropriate standards.

Counselors and parents should help set attainable goals for the gifted and assist in their evaluation. The counselors' interpretation of students' test scores will help the gifted become more aware of their particular strengths and weaknesses.

As part of the counselors' consultancy role within the community, they should meet with leaders representing minorities. These leaders can be role models and persuasive advocates for gifted minority students who require additional encouragement at school and home. Similar assistance may be needed to support gifted girls for whom expectations may be too limited.

Teachers may need the guidance of counselors who know the kind of academic program gifted students should be receiving at middle school. Certainly, counselors need to stress with teachers the differentiated and qualitative elements that should be in evidence in classes for gifted students.

2. TEACHERS

By virtue of their built-in daily contacts with students, classroom teachers are the front-line counselors for the gifted. In many cases teachers are the first and last bastion of support for the gifted, as many middle schools no longer have counselors on their staffs. Counseling then becomes an umbrella term for teachers' roles which range from aiding in course selection to supporting psychological, social, and intellectual development.

There are many studies which list qualities that successful teachers of the gifted should possess. Briefly, teachers should be intelligent and well-educated, and above all they should be free from unconscious jealousy and unconfessed bias against the gifted. Like the students they teach, the teachers of gifted should have curiosity and a strong drive for continual learning. Fairness and a sense of humor are the "clincher" qualities which gifted students respect. A review of research reveals that the personal qualifications of the successful teacher of the gifted are as important as, if not more important than, the professional qualifications.

Teachers who are successful with the gifted (Torrance, 1977) are described as those who

- allow them to work alone and at their own pace,
- are receptive and active listeners, and
- are not afraid to try new methods and improvisations.

Like the students they teach, the teachers of gifted should have curiosity and a strong drive for continual learning. Fairness and a sense of humor are the "clincher" qualities which gifted students respect.

Teachers must be cognizant of the academic and affective needs of gifted, and they should present an educational plan which asks students for significant growth and outstanding performance or accomplishment. Gifted students give significant effort when they see the need and purpose.

Teachers are informal advisors as gifted students plan their educational and career programs. Many middle school-age gifted students have scant knowledge of appropriate courses to take as they prepare to enter high school or careers. Students can maximize potential when they receive advice from teachers who know and understand their needs. With teachers as counselors, counseling can become part of the standard program rather than a wished-for ideal.

3. PARENTS

Parents are the consistent force in the education of gifted children. They hold the key to their childrens' emotional development which in itself will affect their intellectual growth. Parents influence motivation, reinforce efforts, and create feelings of worth. Although schools play an important part in educating gifted children, the parents direct most of the opportunities for learning and experiencing. Family expectancy and example play a vital role in the development of gifted children's attitudes toward achievement in and out of school.

Parents influence motivation, reinforce efforts, and create feelings of worth.

Parents can help gifted middle school students cope with their difficult transition years by following these suggestions:

- Be aware of young gifted teens as more than intellects. They develop in a sequence of spurts. They may conform socially with many types of individuals for the sake of companionship, but that does not imply they are changing their personal ethics. At other times, isolation from their peers may also be acceptable.

- Determine whose goals gifted children are trying to reach. By guiding the gifted toward responsibility and independence, parents allow their children to be the architects of their own goals.

- Be willing to recognize and accept your own imperfections and personal foibles. In doing so, you may become more able to accept the imperfections in your gifted children.

- Acknowledge gifted children's hurts, self-doubts, and mistakes in thought and action. Be firm about where you stand on things, and at the same time try to be warm and comforting.

- Be respectful. When deprived of parents' respect, gifted teens will turn to peers for standards of conduct. Following mistakes, allow for honest discussions of both the hurt and the personal growth taking place. Show love and respect for their beings, even when disapproval is clearly shown for their actions.

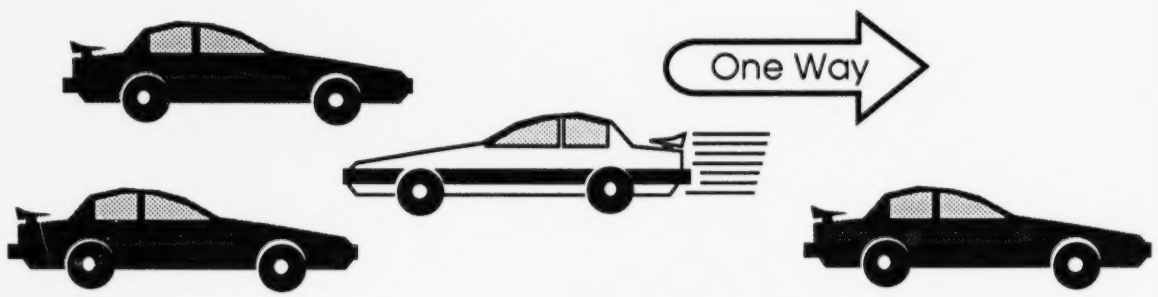
- Show tolerance of mood shifts, the desire to experiment, the academic ups and downs caused by boredom or the need to be a regular kid, the idealism of adolescence, and the subsequent depressions brought on by inescapable reality.

- Don't be overconcerned parents, feeling profoundly responsible for assuring that all the special needs of your gifted children are met. They will make their needs clear to you.

- Show affection with a laugh at the right time, a sharing and openness of feelings. Spend more time hugging than nagging.

A recent study by Seymour Epstein (Goleman, 1988) has value in the parenting of gifted children. Epstein states that certain childhood experiences seem to shape constructive thinking for better or worse. Those who score higher on a test of constructive thinking reported having parents who did not overprotect them, but rather trained them in independence. The sense of having been loved or rejected by one's parents, however, did not relate to the scores. "Constructive thinking depends to a large extent on having parents who teach how to be strong in the world, to learn to handle things on one's own." Gifted students need to develop emotional skills and psychological attitudes that lead to success in everyday life.

Non-Conformist: Doing It My Way



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PART III.
HIGH SCHOOL

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

While acceleration and enrichment are essential for gifted high school students, at this age a new set of social and emotional needs begins to emerge. During the high school years, succeeding academically, preparing for college, and choosing a career become the foremost areas of concern for most gifted young people.

Research has demonstrated that gifted students may have areas of skill development in which they need assistance, even to the point of remediation. The most critical of these include: decision-making, test-taking, time management, and study skills.

Studies show that there are inconsistencies in the way home, school, and work influence talent and contribute to decision-making and career planning skills. The school system has been ascribed responsibility for providing the knowledge deemed necessary for the culture to endure, and for the individual to contribute to society. The home has the responsibility for socializing and providing a moral code. The work place provides a means of self realization and social contribution. An analysis of the characteristics of gifted students and their development is important in identifying the relevant roles of home, school, and work in fostering the actualization of gifted students.

Nearly all gifted students experience conflict in three areas:

- making a single career choice despite multi-potentiality,
- making long-range career plans before having necessary emotional maturity, and
- reconciling personal career goals with society's expectations.

Multi-potentiality shows up as a wide range of interests and abilities. Gifted students often have difficulty focusing on interests because they have so many, and they may excel in all of them. The gifted will never be happy working just for the money. Studies have shown that what gives gifted people satisfaction is a sense of mission.

During the high school years, succeeding academically, preparing for college, and choosing a career become the foremost areas of concern for most gifted young people.

High school students need to make long-range (up to ten years) career plans without the emotional maturity and decision making skills to do so. Long range career decisions require the ability to assess consequences and the willingness to defer gratification. Many gifted students do not have the adult competencies required to make wise decisions.

Societal expectations for gifted students may be too high, or they may be too low. Gifted students sometimes discover that no matter how hard they work, someone always wants more. They become sick of challenges. Women and minorities may have the opposite problem. Too little is expected of them. They may never know or understand

their own abilities. Often gender or racial stereotypes are internalized, leading to underachievement and lowered career goals. (Kerr, 1985)

There is a need to broaden gifted students' awareness of careers. They need to become informed about unusual careers, future trends, and emerging fields, and they need to then begin to establish and pursue personally meaningful career goals. The current practice of having several sequential careers can be a great solace to the gifted adolescent trying to make impossible choices. The choice becomes what to do first, rather than a total life commitment.

B. NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

1. ACADEMIC

When possible, guidance in the area of academic preparation should become the dominant focus of attention during the students' first two years of high school. The teacher-advisor spends considerable time with gifted freshmen and sophomore students planning a rigorous college preparatory four-year program of study. Since most GATE students anticipate further education, the curriculum should prepare them for admission to highly competitive schools across the nation. In-depth study of academic areas may often preclude enrollment in elective courses.

It is essential that gifted students investigate the specific entry requirements of the colleges they might want to attend. Many universities emphasize community involvement, public service activities, and well-rounded participation in scholastic, leadership, and special interest activities. Most college entry requirements include writing one or more essays which reflect the author's personality, experiences, interests, and motivation, and evidence strong writing skills. Specific course requirements, test scores, and high school grade point average are major considerations in preparation for admission. Specific majors may require very definitive course sequences. Students must be counseled early and be well informed about academic requirements.

Guidance should also emphasize testing and preparation for testing. Many students are unfamiliar with placement tests required prior to acceptance to college. Guidance should prepare students for optimal performance on national examinations and should clarify how colleges use the data. Most significantly, students need to understand the value of preparing for such exams. Even before the junior year, students should be encouraged to participate in the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) administered during October.

The experience gained in testing is valuable in and of itself.

The experience gained in testing is valuable in and of itself, however, students have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses at the same time. Several weeks after the examination, each participating student receives an analysis of test scores, the test booklet, and an answer sheet showing the student's

responses as well as the correct answers. National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists are selected solely on the basis of the results of the PSAT taken in the Junior year.

The purposes and uses of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the Achievement Test (ACH) should be discussed with students. Dates for taking the exams, the alternatives available, the value of the different exams, the appropriate exams for students to take to meet college entrance requirements, and the optimum time for taking the exams should also be discussed.

College search activities could dominate much of the time the teacher-advisor/counselor spends with students during their junior and senior years. The choice of college frequently is not given enough careful thought or planning by gifted students. Students may tend to underestimate their potential for success at college. They may believe that students in other schools are better equipped to compete at the most selective schools, not recognizing their own innate ability to succeed.

2. STUDY/PROCESS SKILLS

Teachers are in a unique position to facilitate the development of study skill areas. Some examples of specific approaches include:

- a special course on the development of study skills for high school students,
- use of teacher-made units on decision-making coupled with available commercial materials that attempt to develop these skills, and
- inquiry-based class and/or small group discussion using selected readings that reflect a similar problem in a character (example: Junior Great Books).

3. AFFECTIVE

Too frequently, gifted students blame themselves for being different, and the lack of acceptance by those around the gifted only intensifies their feelings of inadequacy.

Gifted students have many social and emotional needs that a counseling program might address. They need:

- to develop appreciation for the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Too frequently, gifted students blame themselves for being different, and the lack of acceptance by those around the gifted only intensifies their feelings of inadequacy.
- to receive help in learning skills related to social adaptation. They need to understand the differences between cooperation and competition, and when each mode may be appropriate. They need to understand the implications of preferring to work and play alone as those tendencies relate to making and keeping friends, social popularity, and social leadership. They also need to learn the art of compromise and negotiation in order to adapt successfully to varying situations.

- to learn how to channel their sensitivity. Vulnerability to criticism can be devastating unless they are taught ways of coping with their highly sensitive natures.
- to receive an honest appraisal of their ideas and products. Too often, the gifted are never made aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their work, an awareness which is essential for growth.
- to learn a spectrum of practical talents, such as the ability to pick up the unspoken word in the work place, or the habits of mind that foster productivity.
- to learn to assess objectively their own behavior and that of others. Frequently, the gifted have unreasonably high levels of expectations for themselves which can result in a loss of self-esteem when they cannot meet their goals. They need to learn how to accept praise for excellence and to recognize acceptable levels of performance in different contexts.
- to develop an understanding of the positive value of humor and the constructive ways it can be used. Sometimes gifted students develop the use of sarcasm or "smart alecky" responses as a defense against being hurt, thus subverting a positive characteristic with negative use.

4. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

A counseling program at high school should include guidance in the areas of course selection, social and emotional development, study skills and decision-making, career research, and college selection.

An important key to successful counseling in career and life planning for gifted high school students lies in helping the gifted develop a strong sense of their overall potential as well as an understanding of their special areas of talent. Career options along with supporting rationale for each option should be explored. Career choices should reflect life planning models that allow for development and growth appropriate to the student. Specific needs in this area include:

- Career education. The gifted need to have a sense of career opportunities based on their choices, using aptitude test results as guides. Matching career choices with appropriate higher education institutions is a related need.
- Internship Experiences. The gifted need to research and experience career choices for themselves, both through independent study and firsthand experience.
- Mentorship Experiences. The gifted need real-life role models who can provide focus and direction. A mentor may be critical to individual achievement and job satisfaction.

A counseling program at high school should include guidance in the areas of course selection, social and emotional development, study skills and decision-making, career research, and college selection. Students identified as gifted need to work closely with a teacher, counselor, or advisor to develop personalized programs that have meaning and long-range benefits. Guidance programs for gifted students should include the following five suggested goals:

- enroll in academic programs which are commensurate with their abilities,

- take classroom programs which further their identified interests,
- be involved in independent learning experiences which extend beyond the usual classroom experience,
- explore career possibilities as they relate to their abilities and interests, and
- examine colleges and universities which can satisfy their academic needs and interests.

An examination of these goals suggests that implementation can best be effected by programs directed at the specific needs of the gifted students. If a Teacher Advisement program is used, the teacher advisor should meet frequently with students, individually and in small groups. Frequency of discussions and individual appointments increase as gifted students reach their junior year, when close monitoring of college requirements occurs. Advisors, students, and parents should participate jointly.

C. MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL GIFTED STUDENTS

1. ACADEMIC

Counselors should encourage gifted students to take academically challenging courses and should interest students in examining highly selective schools. The following are some suggested approaches:

- Urge sophomore students to meet with college representatives who visit the school campus and to arrange visits to the college campuses. Suggestions should be given as to the kinds of questions to ask, things to look for in curricular opportunities, living conditions, costs, etc.
- Make available to students such books as Getting Into College (Leana, 1980), which outlines the entire process of the college application, and The Insider's Guide to Colleges (Yale Daily News Staff, 1987), which aids students in answering questions about a particular school's programs and campus life.
- Have students submit a profile sheet early in their senior year with pertinent information on test scores, colleges examined, and those to which the students expect to apply.
- Review the application procedure early for seniors.
- Finally, meet individually with students and parents to review the application process and determine the reasonableness of their desires related to choices of colleges.

Counselors should encourage gifted students to take academically challenging courses and should interest students in examining highly selective schools.

2. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

Personnel working with the gifted can use these strategies to address social and emotional needs.

- Simulations and role-playing activities, allowing gifted students to observe situations from an objective distance to gain insight into the behavior manifested.
- Bibliotherapy, allowing gifted students to read about students who have similar social and emotional characteristics. ("The Gifted Child in Literature", 1979.)

- Reading of biographies about eminent adults who may have exhibited similar characteristics as children. Such books graphically portray how the adults have coped with psychosocial needs. (Goertzel and Goertzel, 1962.)

3. CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING

It is in this area of guidance, career and life planning, that school personnel can most effectively assist gifted high school students. Specific strategies that could be used include:

- Career assessment, using one of the many computer career programs available to help students determine their interests and strengths in relation to career choices and college selection.
- Community or business internships that allow students to spend time exploring a career area.
- Buddy systems that match an older gifted student with a younger one for purposes of role model identification and career planning.
- Mentorships in which parents and members of community groups and organizations serve as mentors for individual gifted children.
- Excursions to local universities to allow gifted students to gain perspective on different campus alternatives.

"To stand by and watch bright students register confusion and awe at the possibilities that lie ahead without ourselves providing input and direction is to practice, at best, benign neglect. Instead let us continue to seek ways of making sure our options for gifted and talented students include early, face-front, and frequent exposure to the multitude of challenges which await their future lives. And in our treasure hunt for the career and the college or the sure road to happiness, let us remember that fool's gold can shine as brilliantly as the real thing." (Delisle, 1982)

D. HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM OPTIONS: THE ADVISEMENT GROUP

What follows is a high school counseling plan which is a sound approach to use with gifted students.

Gifted students need individual and group guidance to assist them in career and college selection. Each high school should allocate individual or group counseling time, teacher advisement periods, and parent-student-advisor conferences. At some schools, through a Teacher-Advisement (TA) period, students are grouped by specific grade levels for ongoing guidance. In other schools a specifically trained professional counselor is assigned to work with the gifted. Some schools schedule student and parent sessions on an "as needed" basis. Whichever method is used, positive efforts to meet the special counseling needs of gifted students should occur within the school day.

Developing an understanding of self and others is critical to enhancing a gifted student's self-concept and developing appropriate motiva-

student advocates and mentors. Students are expected to remain with the same advisor for the four high school years. They are expected to attend advisement every day and participate in activities presented by the advisors.

- Freshmen may learn about the challenging GATE and Honors courses, college admission requirements, leadership, public service, and club opportunities available on campus.
- Sophomores may have opportunities to check credits from 9th grade, update four-year plans, select Honors and Advanced Placement courses, and participate in decision-making activities.
- Juniors may evaluate credits, learn about important dates for college testing, schedule college visitations, and do financial planning for college scholarships.
- Seniors may focus on high school graduation requirements, college visitations, testing dates for college entrance and other special senior concerns.

The guidance department and administration need to be committed to the success of the advisement program. Counselors are expected to assist the advisors and their advisees in a variety of ways. Counselors provide in-service training to advisors. They contact advisees needing special help with educational progress or having personal or social concerns beyond the scope of the advisor. They facilitate the career development focus of the student. Counselors are available to parents and students needing assistance and rely heavily on the referrals from the advisors for their intervention, as well as recognizing the advisors as the "front line" people who know the student best in the school environment.

b. Parent-Student-Advisor Conferences

Parent-student-advisor conferences enable personal communication concerning student progress and educational planning with students and parents. Conference dates, 30 minutes in length, are set to finalize first-year students' pre-registration plans for the fall semester, and then two conferences can be held each year. The first conference is held after the first nine-week grading period. Advisors and their advisees can discuss with the parents the student's progress. The second conference can be held in May at the time of pre-registration which is after the third grading period.

Appointments are made during the day and either early morning or evening to accommodate working parents. Most parents will attend day conferences, even if they work. (In a study at Irvine High School, Irvine, California, 80%-90% of the parents attended when such conferences were scheduled.)

These conferences are a major component of the advisement program and make a significant addition to the team approach of student, parent, and teacher participation in personalized planning for GATE students.

c. Counselors' Roles in Advisement

In a teacher/advisement program where teachers take the major responsibility of ongoing guidance, the counselors become an important resource to the advisor and student. Counselors need to share new information and skills with advisor in such areas as

- active listening, group processes, and goal-setting,
- parent conferencing techniques,
- career and college information,
- developmental adolescent behavior,
- crisis intervention techniques, and
- community referral resources.

Counselors support the advisors by:

- receiving student referrals that are beyond the scope of the advisor, those requiring the counselor's professional training,
- conducting large and small group presentations to facilitate the developmental advisement program,
- identifying students who would benefit from community-based education, regional occupational programs, and work experience,
- assessing student and advisor needs,
- developing advanced and specific advisement activities, and
- evaluating the program and developing objectives.

The counselors' role in advisement is essential to provide direct support to advisors as well as individual students.

2. IMPLEMENTING AN ADVISEMENT GROUP

a. Designing the Advisement Groups

1.) Meet with each potential group member.
Discuss goals of the group.
Discuss individual goals of the student.
2.) Clearly offer GATE students membership as a voluntary experience.
3.) Arrange for group sessions to be held once weekly during the advisement period, or during whatever regular schedule your program will support. Be sure that students understand their commitment to participate.
4.) Consider group composition.
Number of members?
Members of both sexes?
Underachievers and high achievers?
5.) Determine ways to evaluate group goals, outcomes, processes:
Whole group discussion/evaluation
Individual group member conferences
Teacher/parent conferences
Pre-tests and post-tests
6.) Consider how long groups will continue. Most advantageous are teacher advisement groups that stay intact for all of the high school years.

b. Conducting an Advisement Group

Starting the Group

1.) Advisement leaders will be more directive in initial groups than those later on.
   a.) Begin with more task-oriented assignments (academic, affective, skill development, career and life planning topics).
   b.) Do not expect trust and acceptance to be present from the start in the group.
   c.) Discuss issues about the group as part of the school environment — e.g., group leader is also a teacher or school counselor, group members may also be classmates.
2.) Leaders will model appropriate and expected behaviors in the group.
   a.) Discuss own feelings about issues of trust.
   b.) Be honest, empathic, accepting, and non-defensive.
3.) Leaders will facilitate group members in attaining group and individual goals.
   a.) Reinforce positive interactions between and among members.
   b.) Support honest self-disclosure and positive giving and receiving of feedback.
   c.) Encourage risking new behaviors and testing the reality of old behaviors.

Running the Group

1.) Leaders will encourage group members to assume responsibility for what occurs in the group.
   a.) Members raise topics for discussion.
   b.) Members become models for other members.
   c.) Members facilitate group members in attaining goals.
   d.) Members encourage each other to risk new behaviors and attitudes.
   e.) Members support each other by persevering in areas of interest, talents, or abilities that may not be supported by outside sources.
2.) Leaders will be aware of their values, attitudes, and possible areas of conflict with group members — e.g., attitude toward gifted and talented perfectionism.
3.) Leaders will meet with other advisors or counselors to discuss group difficulties, concerns, and issues that require feedback and support from outside sources.
4.) Leaders will evaluate group processes and outcomes on a regular basis and will suggest appropriate modifications to group members when necessary.

Selecting Group Topics

1.) Discuss the similarities and differences between the terms "special" and "odd".
2.) Discuss the terms, "gifted" and "talented". Ask members to describe people, either fictional or real, whom they consider gifted and/or talented and explain the feelings that these people arouse. Group leaders should encourage members to share feelings of identification or emulation with the people that have been described.

3.) Debate the notion of social responsibility vs. individualism. How can people maintain their individualism and still be committed to others?

4.) Read portions of Erikson's Identity: Youth and Crisis (1968) and discuss the issue of identity formation and the need for peer social interaction and support.

5.) Bring a record, print, or piece of writing to the group and ask group members to evaluate its artistic merit. From these evaluations, raise questions on the difficulties that are involved in not having an absolute definition of worth. These question can lead to discussion of absolutism vs. relativism. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of both? Some questions that may enhance discussion are:
   a.) Why might people prefer absolutes?
   b.) How can absolutes — e.g., perfectionism — interfere with a person's sense of well-being?
   c.) Do any group members have certain things about which they feel absolutist? Would they like to share them with the group?
   d.) What does one fear to lose by giving up the certainty of absolutes?

6.) Discuss the issue of maintaining or compromising one's ideals. What does a person gain or lose by maintaining or compromising ideals?

7.) Discuss the notion of creative ambiguity. Does the creative process need tension, uncertainty, and/or confusion? Ask members to share personal experiences in which they have felt that something creative had emerged from a stressful event.

8.) Discuss group members' conceptions of the future. How do they envision the world, the country, the city in which they live, the family that they may have, the work that they will be doing, and their lives in general? What feelings does this future version arouse in them? How do they cope with these feelings when planning for their careers and lifestyles?

The Creative: On a Higher Plane

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PART IV. SPECIAL CONCERNS: UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED STUDENTS

A. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The school curriculum is designed to meet the needs of children who develop at normal rates. Why then do children with exceptional abilities sometimes fail? This section explains how gifted underachievers can be identified and helped.

Underachievement may be defined as failure to realize the potential of a special talent, academic ability, leadership, creativity, or psychomotor performance. Underachievement has most often been considered an attitudinal problem, which manifests itself in sub-par school performance. It occurs after the primary grades when early identification is sometimes questioned by school personnel, and students are considered for counseling and/or testing for learning disabilities.

Underachievement has been defined as achievement at 30% or more below a student's ability standing within a group of gifted children. The gifted are typically the top two to three percent of the student population. Gifted underachievers then would fall in the middle third of scholastic ranks and could be called "severely underachieving" when they fall in the lowest third.

Underachieving gifted students often make a choice not to perform, which is a form of self-defense against a variety of perceptions. There is a population of students who are never recognized as gifted because of their underachievement, preferring to camouflage themselves in mediocrity.

Teacher check lists that are helpful for recognizing underachieving children who may be gifted have been developed by Ruth Martinson (1974), A.G. Hilliard (1976), and Joseph Renzulli (1971). The Structure of Intellect (Meeker, 1981) can also be used as an effective diagnostic tool.

John Gowan lists several factors which relate to underachievement.

- lack of clear definitive occupational choices
- weak ego controls
- withdrawal
- poor use of time and money
- lack of basic skills
- negative character integration
- authoritarianism in home environment

- dominant, autocratic, or laissez-faire parents
- no goals or impossible goals for early childhood
- lack of maturity, responsibility, and seriousness of interests
- lack of persuasiveness, self-confidence
- apathetic withdrawal, not activity oriented

Gifted students who continually withdraw from perceived distasteful activities experience early failure. Failures lead to lowered self-concepts, beginning a negative feedback loop.

Gowan lists these contributing symptoms:

- poor academic achievement
- self-deprecation — no pleasure in being
- no clear system of personal goals or values
- vulnerability to disparagement by others
- immature relations with parents
- frequent depressions
- lack of insight about self and others
- free floating anxiety

Exceptional intelligence certainly does not guarantee a happy emotional life. Gifted students have as much anxiety, susceptibility to the problems of addiction to drugs and alcohol, suicide, under-achievement, and parental conflicts as other students, in fact, greater sensitivity may make them even more vulnerable.

The highly gifted may have extreme problems communicating with age peers and may develop anxiety, fear, and underachievement.

Gifted students who continually withdraw from perceived distasteful activities experience early failure. Failures lead to lowered self-concepts, beginning a negative feedback loop. The single most important factor affecting underachieving in gifted students is a diminished self-esteem. Lacking the motivation to achieve, gifted students may develop resistance to classroom procedures and evidence:

- withdrawal and/or refusal to cooperate,
- disagreeable and annoying behavior,
- achievement at a mediocre level, or
- "tuning out" those who try to teach or help them.

Students who develop perfectionistic tendencies may lack a healthy sense of self. They limit activities which require adventures into the unknown. These students are afraid of competing unsuccessfully and need to develop the freedom to be insecure, to be risk-takers, and to respond creatively, knowing that mild failures are not devastating. Occasionally, gifted children seem to set themselves up for failure by developing patterns of seeming over-confidence. This too can be due to lack of self-esteem. Apparent egotism and self-confidence may serve to alienate peers and add to the underachievers' lack of acceptance.

B. THE UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

It is important to provide for underachieving students in the elementary grades. The opportunity for intervention is much greater at this age than at a later time. In fact, it may be the only time that interventions have potential for success.

If gifted children are observed to have any of the following characteristics of underachievement in elementary school, it is time to attack the problem. (Whitmore, 1980)

- demonstrates any of the characteristics of low self-esteem,
- is deficient in basic academic skills,
- has poor motor skills,
- shows a strong defense system,
- exhibits negative social attitudes,
- engages in inappropriate classroom behaviors, or
- lives in a family where there are conflicting parent and school attitudes, or where there are destructive family dynamics, acute authoritarianism, or laissez-faire attitudes.

It is important to provide for underachieving students in the elementary grades. The opportunity for intervention is much greater at this age than at a later time. In fact, it may be the only time that interventions have potential for success.

Young children may "mentally drop out of school" or at least drop out of giftedness early in the elementary grades. Gifted children often have early success as preschoolers. This may lead them to experience stress the first time they find even moderate difficulty with a curricular area or learning task. Young gifted children are often extremely sensitive to interpersonal relationships, making them extremely vulnerable to criticism and covert slights from children their own age, teachers, or family members. Even very young children are teased for being smart, leading to feelings of alienation, and often of guilt, for appearing to be different or outside of group norms.

Children with extremely bright minds who have difficulty getting material on paper in a neat, orderly manner due to poor motor skills or a lack of eye/hand coordination also develop stress from their failure to live up to expectations. Gifted children who quickly develop cognitive and language skills may spend much practice time on those activities and fail to practice the motor skills associated with play. This is manifested in handwriting difficulties, frustration with simple motor tasks, and careless work which all reconfirm low self-esteem.

Special problems may occur at the elementary school when gifted students learn early to apply themselves at a minimum level. A lack of challenge may exist in the curriculum. Repetitions required for the average learner, but not necessary for the gifted child, is conflict producing for gifted learners. They want opportunities to apply their skills using higher cognitive abilities.

Early in the primary years underachievers develop defense tactics. They will rationalize, intellectualize, and manipulate conversation, creating verbal tangents to reinforce a nonachievement pattern.

Gifted underachievers do not usually receive special attention, help, or incentives to bring their performance into line with their

capabilities. Often their underachievement causes their work to fall in the average or low average band. On the other hand, they do often receive negative feedback which further debilitates the achievement motive and leads to the development of the following characteristics:

- lowered self-esteem,
- low potential for risk-taking,
- withdrawal from challenges,
- basic skill deficiencies, and
- fear of failure.

The cumulative effect is a decline in skill mastery and continued avoidance behaviors.

Other classroom behaviors sometimes seen in the underachieving primary gifted are withdrawal, lack of attention, acting out, daydreaming, and aimless wandering in the classroom.

Early in the school experience of the underachieving gifted, the negative feedback provided by some non-supportive and ultra-conforming parents stymie the students' intellectual and emotional growth.

There is only one intervention for nonachieving elementary children. It requires that every possible strategy be employed to provide them with healthy self-concepts. A counseling atmosphere is required in which students are nurtured and where developing confidence and self-acceptance is placed as the first priority. Nonachieving gifted need to begin slightly below the correct difficulty level in content and be taught a process for achievement. Teaching should support alternative learning styles and risk-taking behaviors.

It is perhaps here at the elementary level that gifted low achievers should be given the screening necessary to determine the learning modality that provides their best chances for success. Work in areas of weaknesses should be integrated gradually into the learning process.

Parent education at the preschool and early grade school level must be stressed. Obviously, if interventions for students must begin early, then training of parents must begin before negative patterns are firmly entrenched.

With gifted underachievers, counseling and focused learning programs in the early grades bring high yields. Returns diminish as underachieving gifted children become older.

C. UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle school gifted programs do not traditionally deal with underachieving students. In the middle school underachieving gifted students begin to be seen in terms of their actual achievement rather than their potential to achieve.

Gifted students who lack adequate background in academic studies and study skills not only face self-esteem difficulties, but they begin to experience difficulties resulting from lack of preparation in skill areas. Many times process skills have not been learned. Some of these students did not have to try in the early elementary grades, and trying is a skill they have not cultivated. Fear of possible failure and low motivation combine to bar them from opportunities for participation in advanced level courses. Very few middle school programs have gifted programs that remediate academic weaknesses in an atmosphere that supports the needs of the gifted child, an essential approach for the middle school underachieving child who has skill level deficiencies.

Underachieving students need help with missing skills without sacrificing all of the process skills and stimulation provided for achieving gifted students.

At middle school age, a driving force for all students is that of belonging to a peer group. Programs which help students feel part of a school community, the actual community, and other appropriate social groups reduce alienation at a time when belonging is an essential force. For gifted students, the problem is compounded in the search for a peer group which provides both intellectual colleagues and social friends. A peer group is hard to find. The underachieving gifted are often forced into a peer group which finds its commonalities in failure rather than in intellectual stimulation and social acceptance.

Underachieving students need help with missing skills without sacrificing all of the process skills and stimulation provided for achieving gifted students. The middle school is the place where the underachieving gifted students frequently begin to exhibit negative social attitudes. This is evidenced by the extreme use of put-downs, sarcasm, and ridicule. For gifted underachievers, who doubt their own self-worth, this type of communication and the use of offensive language is used as an attempt to heighten a false self-esteem and to give the illusion of independence.

Alternatives for gifted underachievers need to be provided. Remedial classes are not appropriate, but gifted programs that will shore up weaknesses in the students' background while addressing their strengths are important. To provide for underachieving children, a focus on mental health and a positive classroom climate are appropriate safeguards.

Programs for underachievers at the middle school need to:

- encourage independence,
- develop self-acceptance and self-esteem,
- teach stress management, meditation, and study skills,
- provide activities in drama, public speaking, and survival skills, and
- offer opportunities to use media creatively.

All of the above are process skills that help to increase the success of students and are more appropriate to underachievers than just an accelerated study program or a remedial skills program.

Sometimes nonachievement occurs because of a counseling need. These needs can be socially based in the students' deep concerns about their powerlessness to alter world events and life situations or as a result of family pressures.

Underachieving gifted students have been successfully challenged and motivated by mentors working in areas of special interest to the students. Programs for underachievers might include career possibilities accompanied by the skills and strategies needed for skill building within selected career areas. Relevancy for underachievers is a major issue. The S.O.I. Career Assessment is an excellent tool to use for evaluation, as it is based on a profile showing strengths and weaknesses and it also can be related to classroom skill areas. (Meeker, 1963, 1975) A focus on the underachievers' own career opportunities is a positive validation of student strengths and assists in developing long-range plans.

Underachieving gifted students have been successfully challenged and motivated by mentors working in areas of special interest to the students.

Dr. Philip Ferranti, who writes about the characteristics which lead young people to become "addictive," warns educators dealing with gifted underachievers about the negative reactions to failure — social isolation, rejection, denial of responsibility, and negative attention. (Ferranti, 1981) These reactions lead to feelings of emptiness, fear, emotional paralysis, low self-esteem, dependency, and distrust. Notably, these are all characteristics of dependent personalities found among students with drug and alcohol problems.

Ferranti reminds us that very few students look to high achievement as a solution for poor self-esteem. He recommends programs which help to develop self-acceptance, independence, self-love, stress management, meditation, and study skills.

Researcher and teacher Joanne Rand Whitmore recommends counseling partnerships between students and teachers. (Whitmore, 1985) She suggests using prescriptive teaching strategies which correct learning deficiencies and use exciting, relevant curriculum, and meaningful, rewarding experiences that are appropriate to each of the learning styles.

Most researchers agree that the "least restrictive environment" for gifted students may not be the mainstream classroom. How does this apply to the underachieving gifted student? Research in motivation by Bernard Weiner (Weiner, 1972) points to the fact that underachieving students of any ability level do not show increases in achievement and motivation in the heterogeneous classrooms. Additionally, he points to the fact that gifted students' "motive to achieve" decreases in heterogeneous environments. Different educational opportunities are needed for this population in order for them to achieve.

Perhaps one of the most important factors in helping gifted underachievers is selection of teachers who delight in working with individual differences, support divergence and non-conformity, and are highly skilled in prescriptive education. Teachers need to be trained to recognize and value the strengths of individual children. They should be comfortable with the use of praise and humor rather than criticism and sarcasm. Teachers must know that pressure in the areas of weakness will never remediate problems, while slight pressure to excel in an area of strength will encourage excellence. Teaching underachieving gifted how to evaluate life situations and how to use problem solving techniques are ways of empowering them to cope with their difficulties.

D. UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED IN HIGH SCHOOL

What are the factors leading to underachievement in high school? Gifted students comprise 2% to 3% of the student population, and yet 25% to 30 % of those who drop out of school before graduation are gifted students. This statistic was reported in 1972, and more recent studies find this disparity to be growing. (Marland, 1972)

Gifted nonachievers in high school have usually fallen into a pattern of underachievement since middle school and probably as early as the primary grades. Unfortunately, the flexibility and support needed to deal with underachievment or nonachievement are not often available in the high school setting.

Although giftedness and high academic attainment are not synonymous, by the time gifted students reach high school, perceptions of giftedness are entangled with high achievement. Nonachievers receive little sympathy or support. Their nonachievement is sometimes seen as deliberate abuse of opportunities and lack of respect for the efforts of school personnel. These students find less support from the school staff. Without someone to believe in them, gifted underachievers become more self-contained, unsociable, and unreachable.

At the high school level, characteristics of low-achieving gifted students include social immaturity and low self-concept. These students tend to have a greater number of emotional problems and more skill deficiencies. They leave school with little preparation for jobs or entrance to college.

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Gifted underachievers often come from unstable homes and have fewer social and educational opportunities. Some families take part in the negative reinforcement patterns which continue to foster nonachievement. Families can also be guilty of aiding students in defense tactics which rationalize low achievement behaviors. Interpersonal communication tends to focus on ridicule, sarcasm, and avoidance. Attitudes accompanying nonachievement stand in the way of positive relationships in the school setting. A greater percentage of underachieving gifted, as compared to achieving gifted,

come from homes where there are conflicts between the parents and the schools. (Williams, 1962) There is also a higher percentage of gifted underachieving young people with motor deficiencies and tendencies toward hyperactivity.

Some students set for themselves unrealistically high performance standards which prohibit them from participating in gifted learning experiences at school. These paralyzed perfectionists would rather refuse to participate than attempt and fail in their own eyes and those of others.

Gifted students are often victims of academic pressure. Many writers attest to the fact that students who are not motivated to achieve seldom do, and that fear of failure is a significant factor contributing to underachievement in gifted students. Pressure by parents and teachers is the most destructive technique that can be used on any gifted students, especially the underachievers.

Programs which intervene in underachievement must first, or at least simultaneously, work with self-worth.

Students who are well prepared when entering high school often have to suffer with boredom due to limited course content, limited learning alternatives, and routine presentation of material. There is a "boredom that results from discrepancies between the student's knowledge and the school's offering that leads to underachievement and behavior disorders affecting self and others". (Marland, 1972) Drug or alcohol addiction, disillusionment, fear of failure, thoughts of suicide, and social and emotional difficulties plague an increasing percentage of gifted young people and provide continual concern for those who counsel, teach, and parent them.

In a study entitled "Depression and Self-Actualization in Gifted Adolescents," Berndt, Kaiser, and Van Aalst found that two aspects of self-perception (self-regard and self-acceptance) were related negatively to pessimism and low self-esteem. (Berndt et al) Gifted adolescents tended to be more socially introverted. The non-self-actualized group was more depressed in general, showing signs of guilt, sadness, low self-esteem, and learned helplessness. Guilt resulted if students had low self-regard and low self-acceptance and at the same time received recognition.

Since self-esteem is such an important issue with students experiencing depression, and since self-esteem is a central factor in underachievement, the underachieving gifted student is severely at risk when it comes to depression-related behaviors like suicide and substance abuse. Programs which intervene in underachievement must first, or at least simultaneously, work with self-worth.

At the high school level, there are few programs which stress counseling components for underachieving gifted students. In fact, most gifted programs at this level do not deal with underachieving students at all, even though one of the potential benefits of inclusion in gifted programs centers on development of self-esteem. Programs remediating underachievement must allow for special

enrichment activities designed to develop the students' superior talents and abilities. Underachievers must be identified early. Programs must circumvent problematic weaknesses and highlight abstract thinking and creative production.

Joanne Rand Whitmore, writing in support of programs for underachieving gifted, points out that experiences must highlight success more than failure, must involve prescriptive teaching, and must be exciting, relevant, meaningful, rewarding, and appropriate to learning styles. (Whitmore, 1980) Just as important, programs must have flexibility. They must deal with correcting skill deficiencies separately from enhancing strengths. Highlighting problem solving skills, giving strategies for success, and developing social (interpersonal) skills are essential activities for the underachieving gifted high school student.

Counseling strategies also can be used to help high school gifted students understand "differentness" and recognize similarities with others. Counseling is valuable in helping underachieving gifted students understand how to accept and give criticism and how to be tolerant of self and others. It is important to develop an understanding of strengths and weaknesses along with an attitude of compassion toward self.

Deliberate underachievement is seen at times among populations of culturally different young people, disadvantaged youth, and adolescent bright females. These attitudes come from perceived gender or role expectations.

Sadly, there is not presently a high success rate with interventions for underachieving in the high school setting. It is better to have begun in the early elementary grades when underachieving behaviors began to surface. High school is one of the last places to realize or save potential.

To achieve any success, underachieving students at this level need non-threatening, nonjudgmental relationships. It is possible, then, for the counselor to become the model and mentor. The classroom environment or gifted program environment, must be manipulated to nurture both affective and cognitive development. Teachers in this setting can act as informal advisors. Training in affective communication can benefit the classroom teachers who work with underachieving gifted students. A good listener is an extremely valuable part of an effective program.

There are gifted students who become underachievers as a matter of choice. Underachieving can be a form of social self-defense because of strong cultural or peer role identification. Deliberate underachievement is seen at times among populations of culturally different young people, disadvantaged youth, and adolescent bright females. These attitudes come from perceived gender or role expectations.

E. CULTURALLY DIFFERENT UNDERACHIEVERS

Culturally different gifted students often fall into the category of underachieving even if they have been identified as gifted. Standard measures of identification for gifted and talented often do not apply to students of many cultures, nor do they always apply to students of deprived environments. Culturally different students should be evaluated and identified by looking at the norms of their cultures. If students are two standard deviations above the mean for their subgroups, they need heightened and appropriate educational opportunities, perhaps even more than those students who are in that category in the majority culture. (Gowan et al, 1979.)

F. LEARNING-DISABLED UNDERACHIEVERS

Some students are underachievers because of diagnosed learning disabilities. With these young people, we run the risk of becoming so involved in skill deficiencies and needs that we overlook the strengths and aptitudes of the learners. Many school programs tend to concentrate more emphasis in the area needing remediation, resulting in more work of the same kind rather than work of a more challenging nature.

Gifted students with learning disabilities as well as underachievers learn to assess their abilities in terms of what they have not done, rather than what they have done. They develop daily an increasing sense of "I should do more," or "I have failed in some way." This guilt further debilitates the learners. Gifted learning disabled must be mainstreamed into areas of ability and placed in gifted programs within their areas of talent. At the high school level, coping strategies should be the major special education intervention. Remediation can encompass cognitive strengths as well as weaknesses. (Fox, 1980)

Depending on the learning disability, written reports could be replaced with projects, action research, and oral presentations... At the high school level, the use of computers and word processing and related technology is important.

With the underachieving gifted and the gifted learning disabled, materials which are meaningful, interesting, intellectually appropriate and motivating should be used in all interventions. Depending on the learning disability, written reports could be replaced with projects, action research, and oral presentations. Tools which allow learning disabled students to compute more adequately should be introduced into the curriculum. At the high school level, the use of computers and word processing and related technology is important.

Bright students with learning disabilities are often self taught outside of school and acquire substantial amounts of information on their own. The school needs to serve these students by facilitating their interests through mentorships, by providing counselling services, and by helping learning disabled students find alternatives for acceleration in strength areas. For such students special programs and special admission criteria are available at many colleges.

G. UNDERACHIEVING GIRLS

Gifted girls are an underachieving minority. Even though more young women than young men have high marks in school and hold membership in honor societies, gifted girls go through periods of underachievement. According to Barbara Kerr, gifted girls have somewhat lower aspirations than male students in high school. (Kerr, 1985) They prefer subjects in language arts and humanities to those of math and science even though the abilities required are not dependent on gender. Although it has been found that highly gifted girls tend to be like highly gifted boys in achievement, the types of studies they pursue differ markedly.

With females, there is a critical shift in high school from the goal of achievement to that of developing close relationships. Studies show that the will to achieve for gifted girls peaks just before the age of fourteen and declines until the age of forty when it begins to rise again. (Kerr, 1985) Before adolescence girls talk of exciting careers such as space exploration and anthropology, but in adolescence they focus on careers that integrate romantic relationships and homemaking or careers that have a social framework, such as elementary education, nursing, or library work. Gifted girls often feel they must choose between marriage/family and career.

Lynne H. Fox of Johns Hopkins University has found that gifted girls achieve as well as boys in classes taught by women. This was perceived in a fast paced homogeneously grouped class for fifth through tenth graders. (Fox, 1980)

Girls are less willing to look for opportunities to take accelerated programs in high school or college. Boys do not avoid mathematics courses to the same degree as girls, and they take part in more precollege experiences than do girls. Girls seem to lack self confidence as learners of mathematics and need strong support and encouragement from parents, teachers, and peers.

Women who have been successful in integrating career with family are more satisfied with both career and personal relationships than either homemakers or single career women.

Girls who do take math tend to come from homes where fathers are professional men who tend to be dominant in the family. Either girls with no brothers tend to be stronger due to identification with fathers. All gifted girls need to be helped to see the importance of math and science. This is necessary because of the imbalance in the numbers of women and men in careers involving math and science. Moreover, prestigious universities require advanced math and science for entrance.

The sex role stereotypes held by many educators and parents are a major barrier to the achievement of girls. These stereotypes are still evident in the media and in some instructional materials. An historical study of gifted women can be enlightening to gifted adolescent girls. This study illuminates the alienation and isolation of many gifted women. Barbara Kerr reports that studies of women who have been successful in integrating career with family are more satisfied with both career and personal relationships than either homemakers or single career women. (Kerr, 1985)

Gifted girls need a great deal of guidance in high school in order to define their goals for the future. They need an atmosphere which supports intellectual and educational risk-taking. Most importantly, they need help developing values consistent with their abilities.

All programs for gifted young people should foster a climate which supports risk-taking and develops self-esteem. It is the lack of these two factors which induces underachievement in gifted students. Special problems exist for students from varying cultural background, for those with learning disabilities, and for those of perceived disadvantages, such as gifted girls, as well as for students with perfectionistic tendencies or other emotional problems. With intensive guidance in the development of a healthy self-concept and with education in the affective domain, success is more likely for underachieving gifted students.

V. SPECIAL SECTION FOR PARENTS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

A. THE PARENTS' ROLE IN COUNSELING THE GIFTED

The Balance Between Home and School

It is probably obvious to most people that the parent functions, with or without advice from others, as the child's on-line nutritionist, hygienist, physical therapist, language coach, safety engineer, general educator, and special tutor. Perhaps it is not so obvious, but equally true, that the parent serves as guidance counselor in the development of the child's interests and abilities, personal social adjustment, affective behaviors, and interpersonal relationships.

The nature and extent of this parent/child counseling relationship which evolves (or fails to evolve) is likely to have a powerful impact on the child's ability to seek, accept, and profit from counseling by appropriate others. This is no less true for the average or below average child than for the gifted child. Rather, the role of the parent as counselor for the gifted child varies more in degree than in substance and may be made easier or more difficult according to the unique circumstances involved. In this sense, it is not unlike the role played by parents of children who are physically or mentally impaired.

Circumstances which may affect the nature of the counseling relationship between the parent and the gifted child include:

- The parents' perception of behavioral traits associated with gifted children as positive or negative and the degree to which the child exhibits them. These include high physical and psychological energy, intense curiosity, a lessened need for sleep, a tendency to question authority, unevenness of development, sensitivity to interpersonal relationships, and increased awareness of feelings.

- The degree of match between the parents' abilities and those of the child. Parents may intuitively understand the child's perceptions and reactions because they had similar experiences as children; or parents may be confused or puzzled because the child's perceptions and reactions appear alien to their own experiences.

- The availability of human resources. The parents of the gifted child may find it more difficult to locate professionals (e.g., pediatricians, counselors, educators) who are familiar with the unique characteristics and needs of gifted children and who can offer counsel. Family members, friends and neighbors may be

less supportive of the parents and view the child as an oddity to be either admired or pitied.

- The accelerated rate of intellectual development — particularly in relation to emotional and social growth. Any existing problems tend to be intensified when the child reaches school age. Teachers impressed with the child's knowledge and skill may expect similar maturity in emotional and social areas.

- The presence of other siblings in the family who are not perceived as gifted. Siblings who are less able or not perceived as gifted may resent the gifted child, suffer from feelings of inferiority, or react with anger or aggression. The parents may feel guilty over the differential treatment of the children and attempt to compensate in inappropriate ways.

Teachers impressed with the child's knowledge and skill may expect similar maturity in emotional and social areas.

A paradox for parents of the gifted child is that the more skillful they are in guiding the intellectual, academic, and social growth of the child prior to school entry, the greater dissonance there may be between the child and his or her chronological age peers and the more likely that the youngster will encounter difficulties in school adjustment and peer relationships if differentiated educational opportunities are not available.

The parent as counselor can hope to minimize adverse side effects of the child's accelerated intellectual and social maturity by paying equally close attention to the development of facilitative affective behaviors and skill in interpersonal relationships. The gifted child's increased sensitivity and heightened awareness of feelings can enable him or her to develop empathy and insight which lead to understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of his or her own abilities and those of other children whose interests and skills may differ. The gifted child who feels secure and confident is more likely to find as much or more satisfaction in self-competition as in competition against others and is therefore better able to offer assistance and encouragement to less able peers without being overbearing or obnoxious.

Early parental guidance in the development of leadership skills and understanding of the responsibilities attendant on leaders, together with the gifted child's tendency to have a strong sense of fair play and high ethical and moral standards, should enable the child to derive satisfaction from heterogeneous relationships without exploiting those who are less able. (To become an effective leader the child should also experience the role of being a good follower.)

B. TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS

The following points may be useful for parents to keep in mind as they actively participate in the counseling and guidance role with their child or children. While it can be said that no two gifted children are alike, general principles do seem to apply in this area, particularly when children are young.

- Be alert to spontaneous expressions of interest in the environment. Provide additional opportunities to acquire knowledge and experience in these areas. Encourage self-initiated exploration of the environment, materials, and activities available.

- Expose the child to music, art, and literature. Provide a variety of materials. Note the child's preferences and involve the child in decisions.

- Be sensitive to the child's moods, degree of well-being e.g., fatigue, illness, overstimulation, etc., and allow for lapses in performance levels without being critical.

- Encourage your child's sense of playfulness and the ridiculous as well as interest in innovation and inventiveness.

Don't underestimate his/her ability to profit from activities which might not normally be associated with his/her chronological age.

- Broaden the child's personal, social, physical and learning environment through activities which take into account physical, social, and intellectual development. Don't underestimate his/her ability to profit from activities which might not normally be associated with his/her chronological age. Let the child set the pace. First experiences may need to be largely observational with the degree of active participation increasing as the child's confidence and interest are aroused. As a rule, parental involvement in the form of encouragement, equipment, and special lessons should be geared to the degree of interest the child demonstrates. Encouragement and support of the child's demonstrated interest will nurture the development of self-initiated activities, confidence, and self-reliance.

- Encourage the development of self-help skills, acceptance of responsibility, and the ability to follow through on activities. The child should be involved with and become responsible for household chores and for assisting other family members in the routines of daily living.

- Be attentive to the development of good listening and communication skills. Actively listen to your child and encourage expression of thoughts and feelings both verbally and nonverbally.

- Encourage your child's sensitivity to and empathy for the needs of others. Gifted children tend to be unusually aware of the feelings of others and often seem to share the intensity of the pain or joy the other is experiencing. Since this can be a traumatic event, it is important that the child be encouraged to cope with empathetic feelings in a constructive way.

- Assist and encourage your child's special interests to the degree that the family is able to do so, including such sacrifices as are

willingly made. Do not feel, however, that the gifted child's interests and wishes should take precedence over all other family members and their needs.

Gifted children usually display an intense interest in fair play and resent the unequal treatment of their peers or themselves.

- Assist your child to be self-reliant and resourceful. The gifted child can readily become his or her own best advocate in the community. Help the child early to become acquainted with community resources, such as libraries, museums and other educational and vocational resources, transportation, and community networks. Provide opportunities for mastering the skills which facilitate access to and use of such resources. Also, assist your child in becoming aware of human resources and encourage him/her to seek out others who can share special interests and/or who have the expertise to further the child's development.

- Encourage the development of the child's natural bent for moral, ethical behavior and for community service. Gifted children usually display an intense interest in fair play and resent the unequal treatment of their peers or themselves. They also show an interest in learning which extends to the learning of others. Thus, they often make natural tutors and derive enjoyment from activities which offer little challenge to them as individuals but provide the opportunity for them to assist children younger or less able than themselves. They also readily understand philanthropic activities at an early age and can get much satisfaction out of participation in community projects.

(Excerpt from "The Parent's Roles in Counseling the Gifted," by Arlene Munger from Counseling the Gifted, A Practical Guide to Counseling the Gifted in a School Setting. Compiled by Joyce van Tassel-Baska. Published by the Council for Exceptional Children, ERIC, 1983)

Conclusion

The parents of a gifted child are faced with many decisions regarding the child's education — decisions made more difficult by the overlay of issues of affective development. However, cooperative efforts between home and school in meeting the counseling needs of the gifted child can help make such decisions easier.

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